Problems with implementing Human Resource practices: the view of HR- and first-line managers

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Foreword

In April 2008 I started my bachelor assignment. The main objective of this thesis is to investigate the vision of the first-line managers and the Human Resource managers of SCHOTT US on the barriers which may be perceived by first-line managers when implementing HR practices.

I performed this thesis at SCHOTT US, which is located in Emlsford (NY). I stayed at SCHOTT US for a period of seven weeks. During this time the HR department supported me with everything I needed help with. I would like to thank Matthew Arrigale for giving me the opportunity to visit the United States and for his interest in my research. I would also like to thank Mariangela Petrone for all her help and answers to my questions and her guidance during my stay at SCHOTT US. Additionally I would like to thank Kevin McFarland and Marion Louis for their interest in my research, their support and the opportunity they provided for me to work in the HR department. Furthermore I would like to thank the first-line managers for their cooperation with my research and their openness during the interviews. Finally, I would like to thank John Meadows for his correctional reading.

This bachelor assignment demonstrates that I have knowledge of the most recent developments in the academic field;
- use my knowledge and insights (including methodological skills) to address practical issues in the academic field;
- give a well-balanced assessment of my own work, from the academic stance, from the practical side, and also from the ethical perspective;
- communicate (both orally and in writing) my ideas and insights to a mixed public;
- work independently.

The bachelor thesis is in principle the final part of my Bachelor-programme. The thesis amounts to 15 EC (i.e. 420 hours or 10,5 weeks).

During my bachelor assignment I have had the supervision of Ms. Anna Nehles and Mr. Martin Stienstra. I want to thank them for their patient, insight and support during this process as well during my stay in America as well as in The Netherlands. I was really motivated to achieve this bachelor assignment and I am still very enthusiastic about the subject and my results.

I hope you will enjoy reading it.

Enschede, October 17th 2008

Willemijn Wesselink

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Abbreviations

FLM: First-line manager
HR: Human Resource
HRM: Human Resource Management

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Management summary

The last couple of years, HR responsibilities and tasks have been devolved increasingly from HR managers to line managers, especially to first-line managers (FLMs). This also happened at SCHOTT US, a multinational, technology-based group developing, manufacturing, and supplying special glass, specialty materials, components and systems.
FLMs at SCHOTT US are increasingly responsible for HR tasks and still have to perform the same business tasks. The HR managers must still devolve some operational tasks in order to focus complete on the strategic side of HR. The theory assumes that FLMs perceive hindrances with implementing HR practices. The goal of this research is to describe the opinions of HR managers and FLMs on the barriers which may be perceived by FLMs when implementing HR practices, so as to recommend SCHOTT US how to address these barriers.

The theory demonstrates that there are five barriers that could hinder FLMs when implementing HR practices. These barriers are: desire, capacity, competencies, support, and policy & procedures. These barriers have influence on the effectiveness of the implementation of HR practices by FLMs and therefore on the effectiveness of the HRM system.

In order to examine which barriers are perceived by the HR managers and FLMs when implementing HR practices by FLMs at SCHOTT US, I interviewed 4 HR managers who have different HR tasks. Furthermore I interviewed 10 FLMs who are directly responsible for a team of 3 to 15 operational employees and who are working in different departments. I distributed a questionnaire to 13 FLMs. The analysis happened on basis of an empirical and a theoretical study.

The results demonstrate that the views of the HR managers and the FLMs on the barriers differ:
The factor desire is perceived as a barrier by the HR managers, but not by the FLMs. According to the HR managers the FLMs are a-motivated, but according to the literature they are extrinsically motivated. FLMs state they are motivated and know that performing HR responsibilities is value added. This is in contrast with how they act. On the one hand they find performing their HR responsibilities important, but on the other hand they do not want to perform all the HR tasks they are responsible for. The majority of the FLMs chose business issues over people issues. This choice of priority differs from those of the HR managers, who want the FLMs to prioritize people issues over business issues.

The FLMs spend less time on the HR issues than the HR managers want them to. FLMs spend least time on hard HR tasks, such as administrative tasks and most time on soft HR tasks, such as having performance conversations with employees and managing their people. FLMs at SCHOTT US do not have the feeling of role overload.

Most of the FLMs have experiences with implementing HR practices. FLMs state that they have enough HR knowledge to deal with the HR tasks they have to perform, but that it can be improved. The HR department disagrees with the FLMs on this point, they state that the FLMs do not have enough skills to achieve the HR goals set by the HR department. According to the HR managers, the FLMs lack skills of conflict management, communication, and self-motivation. The FLMs said they lack most technical knowledge of HR and they also want to develop their skills to manage conflicts. These competencies can be developed by following training courses which are organized by the HR department. According to the HR managers these training courses are relevant and sufficient, although repetition would be better. The FLMs do not think these training courses are sufficient and they are not motivated to go.

The FLMs obtain most support from the HR department, their supervisors and their secretaries. But they dislike that they always have to be proactive to obtain the support. The HR managers know they

have to improve this. As distinct from what the FLMs think, the HR managers think they understand the issues FLMs have to deal with.

Both the HR managers and the FLMs perceive the policies and procedures as a barrier with implementing HR practices. The FLMs think the HR policy and procedures are unclear. In contrast with the HR managers, who think the HR guidelines and procedures are clear, but not well communicated to the FLMs, which causes the fact that the FLMs think the HR guidelines and procedures are unclear.

An extra barrier which is perceived by the HR managers is accountability. Because the FLMs at SCHOTT US are not held accountable for the HR practices they have to implement, the other barriers might arise.

The quantitative results demonstrate that policy and procedures is the biggest barrier for the FLMs when implementing the HR practices. The HR policy and procedures are obscure for the FLMs, which can cause the feeling of role conflict, and role ambiguity which FLMs have.

Desire is the biggest barrier according to the HR managers. They link all barriers to the desire factor. They argue that when the FLMs do not have the willingness to perform their HR responsibilities, they do not want to spend time on it, they do not want to develop their HR skills, they will not ask for support and they do not want to spend time on getting into the HR policy and procedures.

To solve these barriers, I recommend SCHOTT US the following:
1. Improve the communication between the HR department and the FLMs.
2. Create a shared knowledge and understanding about the importance of the HR role of FLMs.
3. Add a HR goal to the yearly goal setting of the FLMs.
4. Think about devolving more business tasks to team members by FLMs.
5. Think about another classification of the HR department.
6. Organize HR related training courses.
7. Be more proactive in giving support to the FLMs.
8. Involve FLMs in HR policy making.
9. Think about devolving more HR tasks to the FLMs.

Chapter 1: Introduction

This research will examine the barriers that first-line managers (FLMs) at SCHOTT US perceive with implementing Human Resource practices and at their opinion and that of the Human Resource managers on these barriers.

SCHOTT is a multinational, technology-based group developing and manufacturing specialty materials, components and systems for nearly 125 years to improve how people live and work. SCHOTT develops, manufactures, and supplies special glass, specialty materials, components and systems. SCHOTT has three segments: Precision Materials, Optical Industries and Home Appliances; every segment has several businesses. SCHOTT has production plants and sales offices which are located in 41 countries (See Appendix B: SCHOTT locations worldwide). Over 17000 employees are working with SCHOTT, 6000 of them in Germany, where the headquarter is established and 2000 people are working in the United States. SCHOTT has a headquarter in Germany, and corporate offices in Japan and the United States of America. Each corporate office has a Human Resource department which include several functions, like: Personnel Development, Personnel Services, Compensation/ Benefits, HR Reporting/ Systems, and Recruiting and Organizational Management. The HR departments vary in size at every location. Furthermore, each corporate location of SCHOTT has a delegated HR manager who takes care of all HR tasks for his/ her location (see appendix A: Company description).

1.1 Situation sketch and demarcation

HRM is becoming increasingly important as a competitive force that determines the ability of companies in an industry to earn above-normal returns and so to achieve competitive advantage (Pfeffer, 1995). HR practices influences the turnover, productivity and corporate financial performance; with the right HR policy, an organization will be able to successfully outmanoeuvre and outperform their rivals; and HR contributes to the implementation of the operating and strategic objectives of firms (Huselid, 1995; Gratton & Truss, 2003; Pfeffer, 1995; Becker & Gerhart, 1996)

In modelling the relationship between HRM and performance, HR practices are typically expected to increase employees' organizational commitment and motivation, which in turn affects employee performance and ultimately organizational performance (see Appendix D: Model of the HRM and performance relationship from a Performance Management perspective (Den Hartog, Boselie & Paauwe, 2004)). Employee perceptions and attitudes affect employee performance, which in turn affects organizational performance.

HR responsibilities and tasks have been devolved increasingly from HR managers to line managers, especially first-line managers, supported by the promotion of HRM as a distinctive, more strategic approach to employment issues than the traditional personnel management. A reason for reallocation of responsibilities was that personnel departments had become over-controlling bureaucracies (Harris, Doughty & Kirk, 2002). Another reason for devolution of HR practices is that personnel specialists are desperately trying to distance themselves from operational activities which are no longer perceived to have value (Hall and Torrington, 1998). The creation of strategic advantage requires a system focus and a degree of attention to alignments both within HR systems (internal fit) and with operating and strategic objectives (external fit) that necessarily involves a closer relationship between HR and line managers (Becker & Gerhart, 1996). Devolution of responsibility for people management by HR managers to line managers is therefore inevitable and will improve the organization's competitiveness .

According to Brewster and Larsen (1992) it is argued that within the major areas of HRM (attracting, retaining, motivating and developing staff) the line manager needs to be aware of the synergy between human, financial and physical resources; for him or her, allocating time, money and energy to the development of subordinate staff is an investment in enhanced effectiveness and future

success; and there is no way that this responsibility can be picked up by the Human Resource manager. Providing the first-line managers with the authority and responsibility to control and reward their employees makes them more effective people managers.

According to Hall and Torrington devolution has significant consequences both for the management of people in the organization and the role of the personnel specialist. The role of HR managers will change from doer to adviser or consultant. The first-line manager will have a more operational role.

Previous research has demonstrated that FLMs have trouble with implementing HR practices at the operational level because of five factors. Many authors have stated that FLMs are, in fact, 'reluctant' to take on the HR responsibilities. Nehles et al. (2006) suggested five factors to be the challenges FLMs experience when implementing HRM; FLMs:

1. May not be willing to perform HR activities,
2. Have no spare time to spend on their additional responsibilities,
3. Have insufficient competencies to apply HR practices,
4. Are not well supported by HR managers
5. Are not provided with clear policy and procedures for performing the additional HR tasks.

FLMs and HR managers have their own views about these barriers. According to Whittaker and Marchington (2003) line managers claimed to be satisfied with the HR responsibilities that have been devolved to them and are keen to take on activities that relate explicitly to the development of their team. Hope-Hailey et al, on the other hand, suggest most line managers are not motivated to take on the new responsibilities. This different between the views of HR managers and FLMs will be the focus of this research.

1.2 Problem provision

To explain what will be examined, a step-by-step plan is used which results in a research question and sub questions by asking the questions what, why, when, which and how (Geurts, 1999-19) (See appendix E: Problem provision). The research question of this research will be:

Which barrier is perceived as most hindering with implementing HR practices for FLMs and for HR managers at SCHOTT US?

This research question can be divided into four sub questions:
- Which barriers could be perceived by first-line managers with implementing HR practices?
- Which barriers actually are perceived by first-line managers at SCHOTT US with implementing human research practices?
- Which barriers are perceived by Human Resource managers at SCHOTT US with implementing Human Resource practices?
- Do the views of the first-line managers and the Human Resource managers differ on the barriers which first-line managers may perceive with implementing HR practices?

This research can be illustrated by the model which is showed in figure 1. This research is focused on the point of view of the HR managers and the FLMs on the barriers which can be perceived by FLMs with implementing HR practices, which is illustrated by the blue oval. When FLMs implement HR practices they can perceive barriers, which have influences on the final HR effectiveness. This process FLMs have to go through, is illustrated in the purple rectangle.

This model will be explained in more detail in paragraph 2.2: Theory justification.
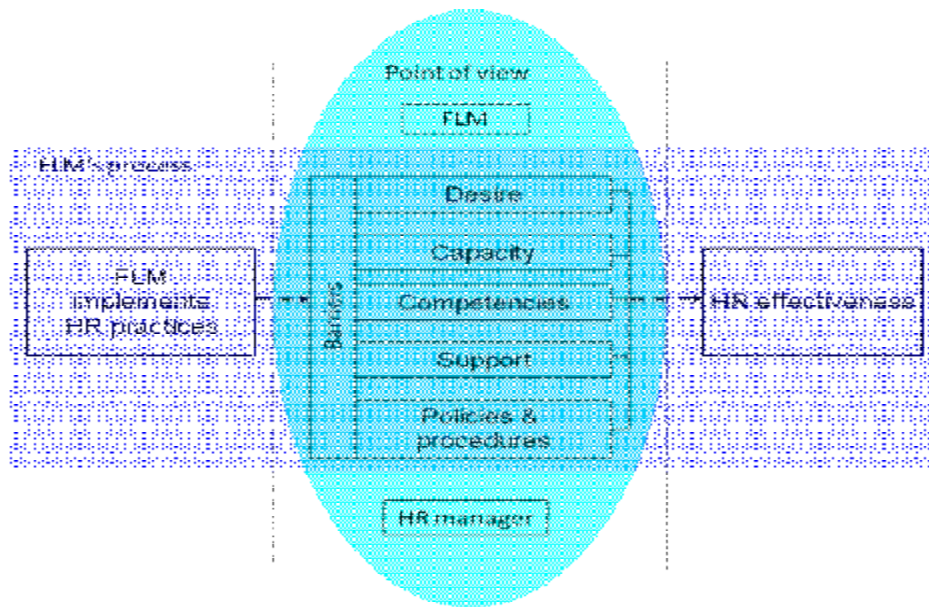
Figure 1: Research model

1.3 Chapter classification

This report has been set up as follows. Chapter 2 includes the literature review, which will investigate what is already known about the topic of this research. In this chapter the theory will also be justified.

Chapter 3 will explain the research approach. The first paragraph will examine the subjects of study. The second paragraph will explain how the measurement will be done. Paragraph 3.3 will explain how the information will be gathered. Finally the fourth paragraph explains how the data which is found will be processed.

Chapter 4 will outline the results of the interviews and questionnaire. This will be done first by an explanation of the tasks of the HR department and the FLMs at SCHOTT US. Secondly, the views of the HR managers and the FLMs on the barriers will be discussed.

In chapter 5 the analyzed data of the HR managers and FLMs will be compared with each other and the theory. Besides, causes for these differences and the results will be examined.

Finally, conclusions will be drawn and recommendations will be described in chapter 6.

1.4 Relevance of the research

There has been a lot of research about the devolution of HR tasks from HR managers to FLMs. The causes of this devolution are described, as well as the results for the HR managers, the FLMs and the organization. Several authors examined the views of the HR managers and the FLMs on this devolution. Nehles et al. (2006) examined the problems that FLMs may perceive with implementing HR practices. They discovered and described the five barriers, which are previously mentioned . This research will differ from previous researches by focusing on the differences between the views of the HR managers and the FLMs on these barriers. Because previous researches and theories are combined with a new research there will be a contribution to the scientific knowledge.

Previous research illustrates that good HR policies will contribute to the success of an organization. So for the success of SCHOTT US it would be a competitive advantage to have a good HR policy. The last few years SCHOTT US noticed problems with the implementation of HR and SCHOTT US wants to solve these problems by changing their HR policies. SCHOTT US already recognizes that there is a problem, but they do not know the causal factors. In addition, over recent years SCHOTT US has had different business priorities than improving the implementation of HR. It has been decided by

management that over the next two years the focus will be more on this issue. This research can give SCHOTT US insight into the problems with implementing HR practices and it should urge SCHOTT to implement actual changes of HR policy and/or strategy.

Nehles et al. (2006) examined the barriers which can be perceived by FLMs with implementing HR practices in organizations which are located in The Netherlands and in Germany whereas this research will be done in the United States of America. The culture of a country can influence the way people work in an organization, which can lead up to different results, so there is a reason to assume that the barriers which FLMs perceive at SCHOTT US will be different than the barriers perceived by FLMs in organizations in The Netherlands and Germany, caused by the American culture. Besides, the different perspectives of the organizations in The Netherlands, Germany and America can be compared.

Chapter 2: Literature review

This part of the research will investigate what is already known about the topic of this research. This will be done on the basis of the research question and the sub questions.

2.1 Theoretical framework

This research is concerned with Human Resource management (HRM), how first-line managers (FLMs) perform, and what their view and that of the HR Managers is on this performance. The definition of Human Resource manager used in this research will be: managers who indirectly attract, train and maintain employees (Daft, 2006) by making HR policy and giving advice.

The definition of first-line manager will be in this research: managers on the first level of management to whom *non-managerial* employees report and who are responsible for executing HR practices on the operational work floor (Hales, 2005; Den Hartog, Boselie & Paauwe, 2004).

So, the HR managers fulfil a strategic role: they make the policy that describes how the FLMs can implement HR practices, and the FLMs fulfil an operational role: they actually implement the HR practices.

During the past, organizations were exhorted to move away from the bureaucracy of personnel management to the apparent flexibility and responsiveness of HRM (Hope Hailey, Gratton, McGovern, Stile & Truss, 1997). Therefore the typology of HRM has been divided between human resource managers and first-line managers, which results in a changing of the role of first-line managers and human resource managers. It seemed that FLMs perceive barriers with implementing HR practices.

According to the sub questions described above, this framework will start with a description of the tasks and responsibilities which have been devolved from HR managers to FLMs. Secondly, there will be a theoretical explanation of which barriers can cause poor performing of HR tasks by FLMs. And finally, there will be a short description of the vision of HR managers and FLMs on the devolution.

2.1.1 Devolution of HR responsibilities to line managers

First of all by *devolvement* in this research is meant: the degree to which HR practice involves and gives responsibility to line managers rather than personnel specialists (Brewster & Larsen, 1992). This research is not concerned with decentralisation of a central personnel function to personnel professionals at lower levels of the organization.

As said in the introduction, over the past decade the personnel function has become increasingly fragmented as it has been devolved to divisional and business unit levels, where the associated pressures on cost, value and service delivery have forced discrete personnel functions to be sub-divided into specialist tasks, subsumed by line management or outsourced to other experts (Ulrich, 1997). This devolution has had a profound and often disconcerting impact on the roles of HR managers and line managers. Bevan and Hayday (1994, in McGovern, Gratton, Hope Hailey, Stiles & Truss, 1997) found that line managers were not adequately consulted about the devolution of responsibilities and were, as a result, unclear about their roles and there are no indications of what the role of the supervisor should be under HRM. Ulrich's work (1997) provides a systematic framework for capturing the emergence of new HR roles (Caldwell, 2003). His vision is that HR professionals must become champions of competitiveness in 'delivering value' or face the diminution or outsourcing of their role (Ulrich, 1997, p. 17). He highlighted that HR professionals must be both strategic and operational (Caldwell, 2003). As a consequence of the adoption of increasingly strategic roles for HR, much responsibility for people-focused HRM – such as the employee champion and change agent roles – is being devolved to line management (Hope Hailey, Farndale & Truss, 2005).

The FLM role shifted radically from supervision to team co-ordination or business management (which is both subject to and more involved in the new practices of people management), and retains a central core of 'performance-oriented supervision', surrounded by additional responsibilities and accountabilities of variable extent and importance that represent a limited incorporation of elements of alternative roles (Hales, 2005). In most organizations, the FLM role had been enlarged. They have a wider span of control and detached concern with work performance and quality rather than detailed micro-management of processes which is devolved to team members (Hales, 2005). The role of the HR specialist will change from that of 'watchdog of corporate policy and procedures' to one of adviser to service managers (White & Hutchinson in Harris, Doughty & Kirk, 2002).

Two things seem to have happened: 1) HR staff have moved out into the business units to be close to line managers; and the line managers have far more control over HR decisions and budgets (Hope Hailey, Gratton, McGovern, Stile & Truss, 1997; Whittaker & Marchington, 2003); 2) there would be a withering away of bureaucracy. The study of Hope Hailey et al (1997) shows that the notion of bureaucracy had declined to the extent that personnel was no longer seen as a rule maker or enforcer, but it was still regarded as an administrative function. Cunningham and Hyman (1999) describe that when the HR tasks are devolved to FLMs, the HR managers can focus completely on the strategic side of HR. The research of Gennard and Kelly (1997) shows that the organization form from one of rule driven processes for line management guidance has changed to a business driven partnership between line management and HR management to improve performance and that they together contribute to achieving business goals.

2.1.2 Performance of FLMs

Many researchers have examined the impact on personnel arising from devolution of the function's responsibilities to the line management. Nehles et al (2006) made a research model (Appendix C: Research model) which focuses on the relationship between five factors that should hinder FLMs and HRM implementation success. These factors are: desire, capacity, competencies, support, and policy & procedures. These factors have influence on the effectiveness of the implementation of HR practices by FLMs and therefore on the effectiveness of the HRM system. Each factor will be explained:

Desire
Most line managers are not motivated to take on the new responsibilities (Hope Hailey, Farndale & Truss, 2005). The willingness to perform the HR tasks are related to personal motivation, or caused by a lack of institutionalised incentives (McGovern 1999; Harris, Doughty & Kirk, 2002). The effectiveness of even highly skilled employees will be limited if they are not motivated to perform. So it might be that FLMs are not willing to perform (Bailey, 1993 in Huselid, 1995). Because line managers have many other pressing priorities than managing and developing the people working for them, it is likely that 'people management' issues will be taken less seriously than production or service goals (Whittaker & Marchington, 2003).

Capacity
FLMs need time for implementing HR practices. The short-term nature of managerial activity leads to a tendency to put a greater priority on the achievement of the numbers (McGovern, Gratton, Hope Hailey, Stiles, Truss, 1997). Also FLMs have other operational tasks which do not reduce after the devolvement of HR responsibilities. Both requirements curtails the amount of time which managers have available for people management (Brewster & Larsen, 1992).

Competencies

Performing HR tasks and personnel responsibilities is a new activity for most FLMs and it is possible that these line managers do not have the skills and competencies necessary to effectively perform the HR aspects of their jobs (Hope Hailey, Farndale & Truss, 2005; Whittaker & Marchington, 2003). Line managers are interested in the new role of strategic HR specialist, but they do not know what it means and they do not have the skills to undertake that role (Harris, Doughty & Kirk, 2002). Support and training from the HR managers can solve this lack of competencies (Huselid, 1995; Brewster & Larsen, 1992).

Support

Devolution to the line managers may be possible but only if accompanied by increased monitoring on the part of the HR specialists (Brewster & Larsen, 1992; Lowe, 1992). HR managers can affect the motivation and competencies of first-line managers by giving support in a good way (Bailey in Huselid, 1995; Whittaker & Marchington, 2003). Lowe (1992) considers low investments by companies in training and management development, and social barriers between supervisors and higher levels of management as preventing integration within management. So, the focus of the specialist function should be in supporting the line management in implementing the HR practices. The role of the personnel specialist changes from doer to adviser or consultant (Hall & Torrington, 1998).

Policy and Procedures

Clear HR policy and procedures can help FLMs to know which practices they should use and the way they should perform them (Gennard & Kelly, 1997). Researchers are concerned with the implementation of HR policies, specifically the consistency and quality of practice across managers (McGovern, Gratton, Hope Hailey, Stiles & Truss, 1997). To be seen as effective, HRM must meet the basic criteria of both the strategic and the developmental perspectives. HR policies and practices must be long term in focus, integrated with one another and in line with the organization's strategy and objectives as well as treating all employees fairly, increasing employee motivation, satisfaction and commitment, and helping all employees develop to their maximum potential (Kane, Crawford & Grant, 1999). Frequently certain constraints within the organization influence effective implementation of HR practices by FLMs (McGovern, Gratton, Hope Hailey, Stiles & Truss, 1997).

These five factors highlight the possible barriers for FLMs to implement HR practices effectively.

2.1.3 Point of view of HR managers and FLMs

Devolvement of responsibilities to FLMs can lead to tensions between line managers and HR managers (Cunningham & Hyman, 1999; Gennard & Kelly, 1997). Line managers have been given greater responsibility for managing their subordinates, thereby reducing the need for personnel specialists at both policy making and middle management operational level (Storey, 1992). The five factors described previously might hinder FLMs with implementing their HR responsibility. FLMs might not recognize all potential barriers and they may perceive some barriers as more hindering than others. Their point of view on these barriers may differ from the point of view of the HR managers.

The work from Harris, Doughty and Kirk (2002) examined this difference of opinion. This case suggested greater commitment to the process from senior management than the HR specialists and line managers challenged with making sense of their respective roles. HR specialists fear that line managers have a lack of the level of managerial skills and commitment to handle employment issues and that HR problems were not accorded the attention they deserved. The case studies of Harris, Doughty and Kirk (2002) revealed significant differences in perceptions about what HR specialists felt they should be doing and what line managers felt HR should be doing. According to Whittaker and

Marchington (2003) the main concern of the line managers is that lack of support from HR during delivery of the service can detract from overall effectiveness. They also note that junior level line managers are likely to feel less supported by HR.

Furthermore, Whittaker and Marchington argue that FLMs lack faith in the HR department. They explained four main criticisms: first, personnel practitioners are seen as out of touch with commercial realities, unable to comprehend the nature of the business, its customers, or its corporate goals. The allegation is that HR professionals base their decisions on principles that have little relevance for competitive prospects. Secondly, HR is often seen to constrain the autonomy of managers to make decisions that they feel are in the best interests of the business. Line managers are particularly frustrated by legal constraints or complain about having to negotiate and consult with union representatives. The third criticism is that HR managers are unresponsive and slow to act, always wanting to check options thoroughly rather than pursuing a series of actions and not worrying about the consequences until later (Cunningham & Hyman, 1999). Finally, HR practitioners are criticized for developing policies that may be fine in theory but hard to put into practice, or inappropriate for their particular workplace.

Line managers expressed satisfaction about the provision of general background advice, clarification of rules and regulations in employment matters, or administrative features of people management involved in recruitment, absence or discipline.

According to Whittaker and Marchington (2003) the HR managers think the primary responsibilities of line managers lies elsewhere than for themselves, namely in meeting service or production goals, through which they give their HR tasks less attention. According Hope-Hailey et al. (1995) the assumption that line management could and would fulfil a HR role was flawed. But the research of Whittaker and Marchington (2003) shows that the line managers claimed to be satisfied with the HR responsibilities that have been devolved to them and are keen to take on activities that relate explicitly to the development of their team.

While the HR managers might have problems ensuring that line managers have sufficient knowledge and skills to supervise staff effectively and consistently, they nevertheless maintained that these individuals are in the best position to adopt the most appropriate human resource (HR) styles and practices (Cunningham & Hyman, 1999).

2.2 Theory justification

As said in the introduction, the research model (figure 1) will be explained more in this paragraph. The focus of this research is the point of view of the HR managers and the first-line managers of SCHOTT US on the barriers FLMs at SCHOTT US may perceive with implementing HR practices. But before this part of the research can be explained, the FLM's process of implementing HR practices has to be explained. The box: 'FLM implements HR practices' implies that a FLM gets more HR responsibilities and has to implement HR practices. This devolution of HR tasks has been explained in the literature. The devolution literature shows the reasons of devolution of HR responsibilities to FLMs, the effects which it has on FLMs, HR managers and the relationship between these managers. It also explains the effects on the organization and its competitive advantage.

With implementing HR practices the FLM can perceive several barriers which are outlined by Nehles et al. (2006) and shown in the research model. Nehles et al. and other authors explained the causes of these barriers. I will use their theories to answer the first sub question: 'Which barriers can be perceived with implementing HR practices?

As the arrow to the last box: 'effectiveness of HR practices' shows these barriers influence the effectiveness of HR practices. The actual result of the implementation will not be examined in this research.

The focus of this research will be on the point of view on these barriers. So, this research will investigate which barrier(s) HR managers perceive as most hindering and which barrier(s) FLMs

perceive and if there is a difference of opinion. Within the research model the blue oval shows two ways to look at these barriers: from the perspective of the FLMs and from the perspective of the HR managers. The theories which are used, describes the tension between the managers which can arise by devolution of HR responsibilities by HR managers to FLMs. It also describes a different point of view on the barriers with implementing HR practices by FLMs.

When the barriers which are perceived by the HR managers and the FLMs are addressed, the implementation of HR practices by FLMs will be more effective. When the measurement is done and the data is gathered, I can conclude which barriers at SCHOTT US have to be solved and I can give recommendations how to do this.

Chapter 3: Research approach

The goal of this research is to describe the opinions of HR managers and FLMs on the barriers which may be perceived by FLMs when implementing HR practices, so as to recommend SCHOTT US how to address these barriers.

This part of the report will explain the research approach. This will first be done by examining the subjects for study, secondly I will describe the variables, thirdly I will outline the data-collection methods and finally I will explain how the gathered data will be analysed.

3.1 Subjects for study

The first topic which will be examined is the barriers which FLMs perceive when implementing HR practices. The factors which can cause these barriers are: desire, capacity, competencies, support, and policy and procedures (Nehles, Riemsdijk, Klok & Looise, 2006). Secondly I will examine the different points of view about these barriers from the perspectives of both the HR managers and the FLMs.

I will question the HR managers of SCHOTT US to find out which barriers they think FLMs perceive when implementing HR practices. I also will use these interviews as a preparation to make the interview questions for the FLMs. Their opinions probably differ from those of the FLMs and therefore I will examine the FLMs too.

When the data has been gathered, this can be compared with the literature. I will also compare the point of view of the HR managers with that of FLMs. Finally I will draw conclusions and propose recommended actions for SCHOTT US.

3.2 Measurement

This paragraph will examine the variables of this research, which will be measured by the interviews with the HR managers and FLMs and supplemented by the questionnaire which will be filled out by the FLMs. The variables of this research are the five factors which restrain first-line managers to implement HR practices in an effective way. Each factor will be described hereafter:

Desire: The willingness among FLMs for successful HRM implementation. Willingness can be caused by several factors (Nehles, Riemsdijk, Klok & Looise, 2006):
- Intrinsic motivation: the FLM performs a behavior or activity out of personal choice, satisfaction, or pleasure and without obvious external incentives (Ratelle, Baldwin, Vallerand, 2005; Spector, 2006)
- Identified regulation: the FLM engages in an activity starting from their own beliefs . For example, because it will contribute to their development, because it is their personal decision.
- External regulation: the FLM performs a behavior in order to attain a positive end state (e.g., obtaining a reward) or to avoid a negative end state (e.g., avoiding a punishment) (Ratelle, Baldwin, Vallerand, 2005).
- A-motivation: the FLM is not motivated to perform.
- Value added: the contribution of HR activities to the performance of the FLM.

Capacity: The time and trouble FLMs can put in HR tasks (Nehles, Riemsdijk, Klok & Looise, 2006). This will be measured by sub-item:
- Role-overload: a conflict that occurs when the sheer volume of activity demanded of the FLM exceeds his/ her available time and energy (Reilly, 1982).

Competencies: Knowledge and skills which are necessary for performing HR activities (Nehles, Riemsdijk, Klok & Looise, 2006).

- Occupational self-efficacy: the FLM has the conviction that (s)he can successfully execute a given behavior required to produce certain outcomes (Bandura, 1977). This construct refers to expectancies in one's capability to mobilize the resources needed to meet situational demands but not to differences in outcome expectancies. This capability can be developed by training and experience:
  - o Training: the acquisition of knowledge, skills, and competencies of a FLM as a result of the teaching of vocational or practical skills and knowledge that relate to specific useful competencies.
  - o Experience: active participation in events or activities, leading to the accumulation of knowledge or skill of the FLM. The concept of experience refers to know-how or procedural knowledge (Spector, 2006).

Support: Advice and coaching from personnel specialists to FLMs on how to perform HR activities (Nehles, Riemsdijk, Klok & Looise, 2006). Support has two sub-items (Nehles, Riemsdijk & Looise, 2006):
- HR support service: the reliability and responsiveness of HR managers to FLMs.
- HR support effectiveness and efficiency: the assurance and empathy of HR managers.

Policy & procedures: Overall HR policy and accompanying procedures to coordinate which practices FLMs should use and the way they should do so at the operational level (Nehles, Riemsdijk, Klok & Looise, 2006). The perceived clearness of HR responsibilities and authorities, and the usefulness and clarity of HR forms, instruments and guidelines will be measured. This will be done by the following variables:
- Role conflict: Incompatible demands placed on a FLM (Spector, 2006).
- Role ambiguity: FLM uncertainty about what is expected from him/ her on the job (Spector, 2006).
- User friendliness: Usefulness and clarity of HR forms, instruments and guidelines (Nehles, Riemsdijk & Looise, 2006).

3.3 Data-collection methods
The instruments which are going to be used for this research are interviews and questionnaires.

3.3.1 Participants
The participants of the interviews are Human Resource managers and first-line managers. The questionnaire will be distributed only to FLMs.

Within SCHOTT US I will interview 4 HR managers and 10 FLMs. These interviews will be semi-structured and will last about an hour. The HR department of the corporate location of SCHOTT US consists of four HR managers who I will interview. These managers have different tasks: one HR manager is responsible for development, one for bonuses and rewards, one for the general HR tasks and one is the head of the department and responsible for the HR managers at other SCHOTT US locations. By interviewing all four HR managers, I will obtain information from different HR perspectives and thus assimilate a total overview of the opinion of the whole HR department. After the interviews of the HR managers, I will interview 10 line managers who are directly responsible for a team of about 3 to 15 operational employees. I will interview line managers from different departments. They are all responsible for different business segments. The sample of 10 FLMs is made in order to obtain a total overview of the organization and to increase the external validity. I will distribute the questionnaire to 13 FLMs. Within this group of 13 there are 10 FLMs who I also interviewed. The additional 3 FLMs are managers who work in the same business segment as FLMs who are already interviewed.

3.3.2 Interviews

The interviews will be done to gain an understanding of the desire, capacity and competencies of line managers as well as the support and policies & procedures FLMs perceive (Nehles, Riemsdijk, Klok & Looise, 2006; see appendix F: Human Resource managers interview framework). I will use the interviews with the HR managers first of all to prepare the questionnaire which will be sent to the FLMs. When the HR managers see other barriers than described by Nehles et al (2006) I will add them to the interview questions with the FLMs and the questionnaire (see Appendix G: line managers interview framework and Appendix H: Questionnaire for line managers). Secondly, I will use the interviews to find out which barrier HR managers perceive when FLMs implement HR practices.

I will analyze the data from the interviews (with HR managers as well as the FLMs) by dividing each factor into several sub-items (see Appendix H: Assessing the constraints of HR implementation: Development and validation of the research instrument interview). Every question is based on a factor and will be evaluated in order to provide an overview about which factor is perceived as most hindering. The factor desire will be measured by asking the managers what they think the personal incentive is to perform HR tasks and what the institutional incentives are. I will measure the factor capacity by determining how much time FLMs should spend on HR tasks and how much time they actually spend on them. The competencies will be measured by examining the skills and knowledge the FLMs have, this is based on how many training courses they have followed and how much experience they have. By measuring the need for support and received support of the FLMs I will measure the factor support. For the measurement of the factor policy and procedures the role conflict and role ambiguity will be used as sub-items to see if policy and procedures are perceived as unclear. Furthermore the managers will be asked if they perceive other hindrances than already noted in order to submit this in the questionnaire and research.

I have selected a semi-structured interview, because according to Babbie (2004) interview surveys attain a higher response than mail surveys. The presence of an interviewer decreases the number of 'do not knows' and 'no answers'. Interviews can lead to a high success quality, answers to a lot of questions and it provides opportunities for extra explanation, extra questions and the observation of non-verbal reactions. I have selected an interview and a questionnaire for the FLMs because the interviews will add background information to the quantitative data which is gathered by the questionnaire.

3.3.3 Questionnaires

I will also use a questionnaire, in order to obtain quantitative data about the point of view of the FLMs. Quantitative data is clearer, easier to organize and to easier to compare than qualitative data. The questionnaire I will use for this research is developed and already used by Nehles et al. (2006) in their research. I will analyze the data from the questionnaire by dividing each factor into several operationalized sub-items (see Appendix I: Assessing the constraints of HR implementation: Development and validation of the research instrument questionnaire). Nehles et al. (2006) incorporated 75 items (under which: desire, capacity, competencies, support and policy & procedures and based on a classification of answers they built seven items for the construct *value added*, four items for the construct *training & experience*, and five items for the construct *user friendliness of HR forms*) in a survey and added some extra variables on general HR responsibility, perceived time spent on HR practices, and the source and kind of support demanded. The respondents will also be asked to indicate their age, gender, the division they work in, department, span of control, length of service in the company, in the current function and in a supervising function, as well as educational and hierarchical level. A 5 point Likert-scale will be used, ranging from 1 ("disagree") to 5 ("agree") (Nehles, date unknown). This questionnaire will be distributed in hard copy to the 13 first-line managers after I interview them.

In order to decrease the risk of non-response described above, I will use a same four-phase administration process. In the first phase I will send a short advance-notice e-mail to all members of the sample. Secondly I will distribute the questionnaire in hard copy. This hard copy of the questionnaire will include some information about the research I'm doing and is sent-out one week after the advance-notice. In week one and two after I distribute the questionnaires, I will send reminder e-mails. This reminder e-mail will go to all respondents of the sample, because the questionnaire is anonymous, so I can not see who has already answered and who has not. This e-mail includes a copy of the questionnaire, because this will increase the response rate (Babbie, 2004-260). Line managers will have three weeks to complete the survey. The time to complete the survey will take about 20 minutes. The FLMs can hand in the questionnaire in a closed box at the reception in the office. I targeted a response rate of at least 50 percent, because according to Babbie (2004-261), a response rate of 50 percent is adequate for analysis and reporting, 60 percent is considered good and a response rate of 70 percent or more is very good. If a high response rate is achieved, there is less chance of significant response bias than in a low rate. My actual response rate was 100 percent.

3.4 Analysis

Analysis occurs on the basis of both an empirical and a theoretical study. I will obtain the data by purely focussing on the results of the interviews and questionnaires and not based on the literature review. The nature of both studies is described and will show the barriers which FLMs perceive with implementing HR practices. As my research model shows (see Chapter 1: introduction) there is the expectation that there is a difference between the point of view of the HR managers and the FLMs on the barriers, and my focus of analysis will be on this difference. The information will be applied to the models from the literature review. First the barriers which are perceived by HR managers and by FLMs of SCHOTT US will be illustrated by the research model of Nehles et al (2006; see Appendix C: Research Model). The comparison of the views of the HR managers and the FLMs will be compared with the literature.

The goal of the analysis is to compare the empirical and theoretical study and based on this comparison I will define the problem and formulate an improvement proposal. In this phase I will also reflect on the original ideas and expectations as described in the literature review. This feedback is an important part of the deduction phase.

Chapter 4: Results

In this part of the report the data, which has been gathered by interviewing the HR managers and the FLMs and the questionnaire which has been completed by the FLMs, will be analysed. First the tasks of the HR department and the FLMs will be outlined. Than the views of the FLMs on the barriers which can be perceived when implementing HR responsibilities will be pointed out. Additionally the views of the HR managers will be pointed out. The views will be described per barrier as explained in the Literature review (Chapter 2).

4.1 Tasks of HR department and FLMs

HR managers have many tasks (see Appendix J: Tasks of HR department and FLMs). The main task of the HR department is HR policy making. At SCHOTT US the HR department is not responsible for direct reports. However, the head of the HR department is directly responsible for the HR staff at all SCHOTT locations in North America. The employees of SCHOTT report to their business managers. Every line manager of SCHOTT is provided with HR tools which are communicated by the HR department (see Appendix K: HR tools at SCHOTT US). These HR tools help the line manager to support their employees with the HR related issues they may have. As you can see in Appendix K: HR tools at SCHOTT US some of the HR tools are adapted to the local situation and some are consistent in every SCHOTT location in the world. When the managers cannot solve an issue with the information which is available, they can ask the HR department for support. Although the line managers do not need to report to the HR managers, they need to communicate HR related issues to the HR department. This will be explained in more detail later this chapter.

During the last few years HR tasks have been devolved increasingly to the FLMs. I.e. the FLMs have to inform the HR department about transactions, promotions, salary increases etc.; they are expected to take care of the way people behave according to the dress code; they are more involved in job interviews; they are expected to prepare the job descriptions for the members of their teams; and the most important HR task which FLMs have, is the direct management of their employees, which includes: scheduling their employees, review conversations, communicating salary increases, making an employee development plan, managing workflow, creating goals, address under-performance of employees to the HR department and recognizing the training needs of employees. In addition to the HR tasks the FLMs have their individual business tasks, which depend on the department they are in.

4.2 Views of the first-line managers

Table 1: Sex and direct span of control

Count					
		direct span of control			
		1 - 5	6 - 10	11 - 15	Total
Sex	male	4	3	1	8
	female	3	1	1	5
	Total	7	4	2	13

Table 2: Sex and indirect span of control

Count					
		indirect span of control			
		1 - 5	6 - 10	11 - 15	Total
Sex	male	3	2	3	8
	female	3	1	1	5
	Total	6	3	4	13

From the thirteen FLMs who were interviewed and asked to complete the questionnaire, there were five women and eight men. They have an average age of 45 years. Most (11) FLMs have a bachelor degree or are graduates. The FLMs have an average direct span of control of 1-5 employees and an average indirect span of control of 6 – 10 employees. Table 1 shows that there are more male line managers with a span of control bigger than 1 – 5 at SCHOTT US. And table 2 shows the male line managers have even a bigger indirect span of control.

The managers work on average for 2-5 years in their current position and for 5 – 10 years as a manager. Out of the ten people who were interviewed, five of them had experiences as a manager prior to SCHOTT US. Seven FLMs took care of HR based issues in their previous role.

4.2.1 Desire

From a scale from 1 to 5, the FLMs have a willingness of 3.71 to engage in performing HR responsibilities. The results will be given per sub items: internal motivation, identified regulation, external regulation and a-motivation.

The average intrinsic motivation is 3.11. There are three FLM who said during the interview that using HR practices make them feel good. They stated that they like using HR practices, because it is challenging, or that they are proud of themselves when they see their team is working efficiently and doing a good job.

The average identified regulation is 3.47. The FLMs think people issues are interesting. One FLM stated: '*I want to develop my skills for advancing my career and I like to learn how people react on my way of being.*' These FLMs think HR practices make their jobs easier.

The average external regulation is 3,47. They answered the question why the FLM uses HR practices with: '*Because it is necessary*', '*because I have to*', or '*it is necessary in terms of leadership and management and it is part of the job*'.

Finally, the average a-motivation is 3,17. Some FLMs are not motivated to use HR practices. One FLM stated: '*Some people are difficult to manage and that is no pleasure for anybody, I don't like to deal with difficult conversations and conflicts*'. And there are three FLMs who said they do not like HR issues. One FLMs argued: '*I don't really know why I use HR practices, maybe because it gives me guidelines how to deal with certain things.*'

The differences between the sub items of willingness to engage in performing HR responsibilities are not huge. Although it seems that the FLMs are mostly extrinsically motivated.

The FLMs agree with an average of 4.16 performing HR responsibilities is value added. They agree most that it helps the people in their team to grow and it helps them to supervise their team. In one interview it has been said: '*Managing your direct reports is a daily activity, there are expectations we have of them and in order for those to be met, we try to work as a team and everybody is a part of a machine, which only works when everybody is working together.*' They agreed less with the statement that HR practices would help them to get the right people with the right skills at the right place.

In the questionnaire the FLMs did not totally agree that performing HR responsibilities would help them to reach their production and performance goals. This was also the case during the interviews. This can be illustrated by two comments by FLMs during the interviews. One said: 'Human resource is the most valuable resource of a company, the success of the company relies on the people'. Another FLMs stated: '*HR practices don't really help me to reach my business goals, the employees can motivate themselves*'.

Almost all FLMs realize motivation and connecting with their team is important and will help them to achieve their business goals. '*I feel that building a relationship with my employees is the most effective way to get to a business success*'.

The results of the questionnaire and interviews showed that two FLMs choose people issues over business issues when they have to. These two FLMs say that the employees need to be the priority, otherwise the business goals will not be achieved at all. One FLM stated: '*People issues come first,*

but I don't prefer them'. Seven FLMs always choose business issues over people issues, what differs from the results of the interviews, which showed that eight FLMs choose business issues over people issues. These FLMs see business issues as more important and more pressing, because there is often a lot of money involved, or because that is what is in their job description. Certain comments illustrate the opinion of the FLMs about this: '*We deal with HR issues later'*, '*The main focus is on business'* and '*HR issues can wait'*.

Four FLMs were asked if they or the HR managers were better at motivation of the employees. Three of them agreed FLMs were better. HR managers are not directly involved with issues on the work floor, they do not know all the time what is happening, that is why FLMs know the people better and are more able to motivate their team. One FLM stated: '*HR can, because of a lack of understanding, cause demotivation'*. One FLM thinks HR has better expertise and better skills to use the HR tools and thereby is the right person to motivate the employees and to deal with the HR issues.
One FLM thinks most employees are motivated by the tasks they have to do, so motivation is not needed that much.

4.2.2 Capacity
The list of tasks summarized up by FLMs during the interview is shown in Appendix J: Tasks of HR managers and FLMs. Based on the questionnaire, twelve FLMs agreed they are responsible for administrative tasks concerning managing his/ her team. Ten FLMs say they are responsible for staff planning and staff changes. They all are responsible for the selection of new employees, none for the recruitment. They all say they are responsible for evaluating, training and assessing employees and for the task of reward and/ or bonuses. Twelve FLMs feel responsible for giving advice and motivate their team.
During the interview the FLMs were asked how much time they spend on HR tasks on average. The answers varied between 'as little as possible' and '20 hours a week'.

Table 3 shows that FLMs spend least time on administrative tasks (hard HR approach) and most time on having performance conversations with employees and managing their people (soft HR approach) (see marked cells). According to the results of the interviews six FLMs say they would spend as much time on HR practices as needed: '*I'm not looking for more time spending, I enjoy my business stuff more, but when it is necessary I will spend more time on it'*. One FLM would only be willing to spend more time on HR tasks when (s)he had a bigger team. Four FLMs would rather spend less or no time on using HR practices: '*Leave them out: it is a distraction from important things'*.
The results of the questionnaire as well as the interview show that FLMs do not think they have to spend more time on HR tasks in order to achieve optimal results.

Ten FLMs do not agree with the statement which says they have to perform HR responsibilities which they do not really have the time and energy for. Four FLMs need more hours in the day to perform all the HR responsibilities which are expected from them. Eleven FLMs seem to get caught up with performing their HR responsibilities. Eight FLMs have the feeling that there are not enough hours in the day to optimally perform all tasks asked from them and two FLMs answered neutral. None of the FLMs ever cancel commitments to their HR responsibilities. Two FLMs have to prepare priority lists to get done all the HR responsibilities they have to do, nine FLMs do not prepare these. Five FLMs answered neutral or agreed with the statement: '*I feel I have to perform HR responsibilities hastily and maybe less carefully in order to get everything done'*. To conclude this paragraph you can say that the FLMs at SCHOTT US do not feel a certain amount of role overload (average of 2.15).

Table 3: Average time spend by FLMs

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Average Administrative HR tasks	9	1,14	2,43	1,7460	,43318
Average HR planning	12	1,00	3,60	2,3333	,98473
Average Recruitment & Selection	12	1,00	5,00	2,4167	1,12479
Average Evaluation	12	1,14	3,57	2,5833	,71157
Discussion of progress with your employees	13	1	5	3,08	1,038
Average Rewards	12	1,00	4,00	2,3611	1,06798
Average People Management	11	1,60	5,00	3,1091	1,01730
Valid N (listwise)	7				

4.2.3 Competencies

With an average of 3.94 the FLMs agree that they have enough HR knowledge and competencies to implement HR responsibilities and tasks. Six of the FLMs who were interviewed said they have enough HR knowledge for what they need to deal with, but they agree it can be improved. Twelve FLMs have experiences as a line manager and they agree with an average of 4.00 this experience is relevant for performing their HR responsibilities. Six of them think this experience is sufficient for performing their HR tasks.

Nine of the FLMs have had HR training courses. With an average of 3.44 they think attending these courses is relevant. With an average of 2.78 the FLMs think attending the training courses is sufficient. During the interviews it was stated that the training courses were very useful and that most of the line managers went in negatively and not really motivated, but really learned something. One FLMs said that repetition was not needed, another said that a refresher every two or three years would be a contribution.

The FLMs agreed during the interview that they need more training in how to cope with HR issues, for example with conflict situations. When an employee at SCHOTT is promoted to a line manager, (s)he will receive an employee handbook and a leaderships handbook where they can read how to deal with HR related issues. What most FLMs lack is technical knowledge of HR which they want to be solved by an internal training from SCHOTT. They want an explanation of the HR guidelines and practices when they start their first line management role. There were two FLMs who lack legal information in the employee handbook. The FLMs would also like to have more background information when the HR department decided to change something in order to give better support to their employees.

4.2.4 Support

The results of the questionnaire showed that FLMs agree with an average of 3.27 that they need support. During the interviews two FLMs stated they do not need help from HR, but they also said they sometimes ask for support. One FLM stated: '*I wouldn't say it is critical, but it is nice to be able to go*'. Table 4 shows FLMs need most support in legal matters (see marked cell), they also stated this during the interview. They also need support in performing HR responsibilities, and personal guidance on how to use HR instruments. They need least support in personal guidance on how to

perform HR activities (see marked cell). From the results it seems that female FLMs need more support than the male FLMs do.

Table 4: Support need of FLMs

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
I need support in legal matters	12	4	5	4,67	,492
I need administrative arrangements	12	2	5	3,25	,866
I need faster delivery of HR services	13	1	5	2,77	1,092
I need more and better HR policies	13	2	5	2,92	1,256
I need advice on how to cope with specific people management problems	13	1	5	2,77	1,092
I need personal guidance on how to perform HR activities	13	1	4	2,62	,768
I need personal guidance on how to use HR instruments	13	2	4	2,85	,689
I need best practices	13	1	5	3,23	1,092
I need support in performing my HR responsibilities	13	3	5	3,92	,760
Valid N (listwise)	11				

The source of support for FLMs differs per FLM. Most support comes from the HR department, supervisors and secretary. During the interview the FLMs were asked if there was anybody outside the HR department helping them. Six FLMs said there is. The other sources of support are their bosses, business segment management, or colleagues. Although, two FLMs would never use their colleagues as a source of support, because they think the HR issues they have to deal with are too confidential to share with this group.

They all can get support from the HR department and their supervisor. Eight of the FLMs (strongly) agree the HR department supports them with the implementation of their HR responsibilities and tasks. The FLMs stated: '*We get guidance from HR when we need it*', and '*We implement HR practices in conjunction with HR*'. The interviews found out that one FLMs would prefer doing the implementation on his/ her own. '*HR lacks making decisions. A lot of times I want to get more involved in the implementation of HR practices, because it will affect me the most*'.

Seven FLMs get sufficient support from their supervisor and three think this support is insufficient. The medical service department and the works council is only known by three FLMs. For both support sources, two of the FLMs thinks that they give insufficient support. Six FLMs have a secretary. 50 Percent of these FLMs strongly agree that the secretary supports them, the other 50 percent (strongly) disagreed. Five of the thirteen FLMs have a substitute who can give support, only one of the FLMs (strongly) agrees that the substitute gives support. In brief, not all support sources

of SCHOTT US are known by the FLMs. Furthermore, the support of the medical service department, works council, secretary and substitute is perceived as ineffective by most FLMs.

The FLMs agree (3.67) that the HR department is reliable and responsive. They especially (strongly) agree that when they have a problem and ask the HR department for help, they are sincerely interested in solving their problems. One FLMs stated: '*HR is wanting to help and give the support timely*'. Five FLMs said HR gave them the support they needed, but only when they asked for it: '*When I go directly to HR I get the support I am looking for, but they don't come to me. When they are more proactive, the FLMs are sure they know what is available*', and '*They never come to us. It would help me and my department to feel more recognized to the company when they would do that and it would help HR to get to know us*'.

The results of the questionnaire showed that the FLMs agree (3.35) the HR department is self-confident, they know what to do and have empathy. One FLM stated: '*HR knows how to handle when I have a problem, which is how it should be, we don't have the time to study and learn and we do not want to be involved in HR unless we have to*'. But during the interviews the FLMs were more critical on the HR department. One FLM stated: '*I'm not very impressed by HR. Because of the fluctuation in the HR department, the faith in HR disappeared a little for me as well as for my employees. HR needs more authority and stricter rules. HR misses the seniority*'. Two other FLMs think the same. They would like to see the support of HR stronger, with more authority, and legal practices and guidelines that are clear and fair. According to the FLMs the HR department needs to change in certain ways: '*HR needs to adapt a more active role. They should assist. They should help mentor people, make us feel important, they have to get to know us better*'. Other FLMs said: '*HR needs more knowledge about the company*' and '*HR should give expectations they can reach*'. But they also agree most that the HR department is polite and interested in them (3.62). They agree least that the HR managers understand the specific problems line management has (3.00).

4.2.5 Policy and procedures

Most of the FLMs are not involved in HR policy making at SCHOTT US. In the past the line managers were involved. They were present in management meetings, which included discussions about HR policies and could provide feedback to the HR managers. This changed, and now two FLMs are involved when it concerns their business segment.
Six FLMs think they should be involved, certainly when it has to do something with them or their employees. They have the opinion HR is too far away from action: '*They are working in a theoretical world and I think they need the input from a manager for assistant on the practical side. HR doesn't understand how it can affect people sometimes*'. But recently HR gives more and more tasks out of hands.
Two FLMs do not want to get involved in policy making. They stated: '*I don't have time for it*', and '*I think the HR department is qualified enough. They are educated to work on those things, I have my own qualities*'.

During the interviews it became clear that four FLMs do not have a job description which explains what the HR responsibilities of the FLMs are. The other six FLMs have a job description, but it is not explicitly stated how to manage their people, just that they have to manage their team.
The interviewees said most of the HR practices come from their own experience. Three FLMs also received HR practices from the HR department, one from his/ her boss and two use the employee manual to get to know what the HR practices are.
The results of the questionnaire showed that four FLMs exactly know what is expected of them in performing their HR responsibilities, three were unsure.

With an average of 2.34 FLMs experience conflicts with implementing HR responsibilities and tasks. This means that there is, in average, no talk of role conflict at the FLMs at SCHOTT. Although the way FLMs experience the role conflicts varies a lot. The most striking outcomes will be explained. Most divided answers were given at the following statements:

Five FLMs answered neutral, six (strongly) disagreed and two (strongly) agreed on the statement: '*When I implement HR responsibilities I have to do things in a different way than the most efficient way*'. Four FLMs agreed that they have to work under incompatible HR policies and HR guidelines, seven disagreed. One FLM receives a HR assignment without the manpower to complete it. Four FLMs (strongly) agreed they work with two or more groups who operate quite differently in performing HR responsibilities. Three FLMs (strongly) agreed with the statement: '*I perform HR tasks that are apt to be accepted by one person and not accepted by others*', four were neutral. All FLMs agreed they receive HR assignment with adequate resources and materials to execute it. And they all think their work on things in performing their HR responsibilities is necessary.

With an average of 3.01 the FLMs at SCHOTT feel role ambiguity. The most FLMs answered these questions neutrally, but there were some peaks, the most striking outcomes will be explained:

46,2 Percent feel certain about how much authority they have. One FLM did not know that (s)he has divided his/ her time in performing their HR responsibilities properly, five were neutral. The results of the questionnaire showed five FLMs are (strongly) sure they know what their HR responsibilities are, four are neutral. Four FLMs have to 'feel their way' in performing their HR responsibilities, five were neutral. Seven FLMs (strongly) disagreed that they are uncertain as to how their HR responsibilities are linked, two (strongly) agreed. Two FLMs think the explanation is clear of what has to be done in performing their HR responsibilities, seven were neutral.

Out of the questionnaire it seems that six of the FLMs lack clear, planned goals and objectives for performing their HR responsibilities, three were neutral. Eight FLMs said they had enough HR policies and guidelines to help them, three FLMs said they lack these. Four FLMs think the HR instruments they are provided with are clear and understandable, four (strongly) disagreed. Four FLMs (strongly) agree that the HR instruments they are provided with are concrete enough to use, four (strongly) disagree.

The FLMs are neutral (average of 2.97) about the HR-forms and –guidelines which are available for them. During the interview seven FLMs stated that they are provided with guidelines for using HR practices. Two FLMs thought these guidelines were helpful. Five FLMs agreed these were not clear and limited: '*Our employee handbook is very soft and leaves a lot of room for interpretation*'. One FLM is not aware of any guidelines. Six FLMs perceive the HR procedures as part of the job and think they are not clear. A FLM argued: '*I guess I don't have a good understanding about what they are or what is expected from me how to use them. They are not explicitly explained to me in how to use them*', and '*Some policies I don't get at all*'. The FLMs agree that the HR practices are not communicated well and think that causes the obscurity of the practices. They also state that the practices are available when you need them, but you have to be proactive to get them. The other four FLMs are neutral about the HR practices. They said that the HR practices overall are 'adequate' and 'fine'.

They mostly agree with the statement: '*The guidelines I get, help me to perform my HR responsibilities*' (3.23). They agree least with the statement: '*The HR instruments I am provided with are clear and understandable*' (2.77). During the interviews was also stated: '*I need stricter rules*' and '*I need more guidance from HR*'.

4.2.6 Other hindrances

Out of the five barriers which are analyzed, the FLMs are also asked if they felt anything else as hindering them from implementing HR practices. Two would like to be able to reward his/ her employees financially more than once a year, because (s)he thinks this will cause more motivation.

They also were asked what they thought needs to change most regarding the use of HR practices. Four of the FLMs answered that the communication between the HR department and the FLMs has to improve. They suggest that HR can have more meetings with the FLMs and additional training about what is expected from them. The HR department could more systematically documented what is expected from people. Four FLMs feel limited in the development of the employees: 'We are stuck in the system of SCHOTT. When I am developing my people I cannot offer them something better'. Another FLM would like to have the possibility of e-learning. (S)He said: 'A couple of years ago this was possible, but it was very impersonal. Nobody had the incentive to finish it, or was motivated. E-learning will work when managers give some pressure, you have to get me to buy in'. The FLMs want the management of employee development to be changed.

4.2.7 Conclusion

The questionnaire proved that the FLMs perceive the policy and procedures as the biggest barrier. This result differs from the results of the interview, which states that the FLMs perceive capacity as biggest barrier. There were no FLMs who saw desire as the biggest barrier. In figure 2 the results of the interview are outlined.
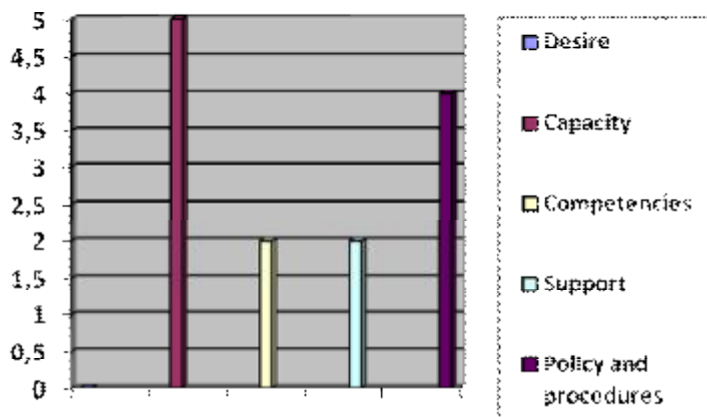

Figure 2: Biggest barrier perceived by FLMs.

4.3 Views of HR managers

Several circumstances resulted in fluctuation in the HR staff of SCHOTT US during the last two years. Only one of the members has more than two years continuous service at the HR department of SCHOTT US. The head of the HR department worked for two years at the HR department at SCHOTT US, than he left to work for two years at the HR department at the SCHOTT head office in Germany and after that period he became the head of the HR department at SCHOTT US, which was already planned before he went to Germany. Furthermore one of the previous HR managers quit her job, because of pregnancy, so a new HR manager had to be hired. Finally, 15 months ago the HR department added an additional hire, to decrease the workload.
All the HR managers gained HR experiences at the organizations they worked for prior to SCHOTT or at the function they were in prior to their present function. The HR managers all have a bachelor or a master degree.

4.3.1 Desire

The HR managers agree that the reason for FLMs to perform their HR responsibilities differs per manager. They make a distinction between motivated and non-motivated FLMs. The first group is intrinsically motivated and really enjoys implementing HR practices. The second group perceives the HR practices only as a distraction of their day to day job and they only implement the HR practices

because they have to. '*They don't have a passion for it, but they know that it is their responsibility to do their HR tasks too.*' The HR managers have to tell those FLMs exactly what to do. This is done by emailing the managers in person and following them up by email and phone calls until they have done their job. This second group will not perform when the HR department does not force the FLMs to do their HR tasks.

It is also said that the reason for FLMs to implement HR practices depends on what the issue or policy is. There is the belief that there are some FLMs who want to implement HR tasks, but they do not believe in the policy. The way a HR policy is effecting the FLM will influence the motivation of the manager to work according the policy or not.

All HR managers think that if the FLMs perform in the way they could perform, they could provided a huge contribution to the organization. A HR manager stated: '*They are more in the position to get higher performing employees, they can increase the employee moral*'. The employees rather listen to the FLM than to a HR manager, and the FLM is better at creating a good atmosphere, developing his/her people and selecting the right people, because a FLM is more involved with the issues on the work floor. This will lead to more sales, faster processing times and increases the employee's output. One HR manager said: '*When the FLMs do their job right, it decreases the difficulty of HR jobs. The HR department spends a lot of time on trying to get the FLMs buy in*'. The other HR managers also perceive the FLMs motivation to implement HR practices as the biggest challenge. To get the FLMs motivated the HR managers try to explain why certain HR tools have to be used, what the benefit of the implementation on the short and long term will be and why it is really important for the organization as a whole to implement the HR practices on time and in the right way.

All HR managers agree that FLMs prefer their business issues over their people issues, on which they perform better too. One HR manager stated: '*I think we have some managers who could not care less about HR responsibilities. They would prefer to forget about the whole HR side of their job*'. The FLMs started working as a member of the team and the best team member became the manager. So, the FLMs are hired based on their technical knowledge and not, or just a little, on their HR knowledge. Because of this recruitment process FLMs expect they have to focus on the business issues. Because the business issues are numbers driven, the FLMs can see the end results of their effort, which motivates them more than the people issues, which have only non-tangible results.

4.3.2 Capacity
The HR managers perceive the HR task of the FLMs as a daily job. The HR managers say: '*I think every interaction between a manager and employee is an opportunity to act in a strategic HR way*', and: '*HR is a fulltime job*'. When they get a cup of coffee or have a conversation with one of their employees, or when they explain something to their employees, they spend time on HR tasks. Therefore two of the HR managers say the FLMs have to spend at least 50 percent of their time on HR tasks. One HR manager agrees that HR issues are important, but thinks that spending 25 percent of their time is enough to let the team work efficiently, but (s)he agrees that when there are issues, the FLM need to spend whatever it takes to get it solved. One HR manager thinks that spending 30 minutes to one hour a day will be enough.

All HR managers think the time FLMs actually spend on HR tasks is less than the HR managers want them to. According to the HR managers the average FLM spends between 10 and 20 percent of their time on people issues.

The HR managers give several reasons for the time FLMs spend on HR tasks; first of all the HR managers have the opinion that SCHOTT is a very lean organization, and that every employee has to do the job of two persons. That's why they are so busy doing their business issues and they do not have time left for the people issues. Secondly, the HR managers make a connection between the factor desire and capacity and state that the time FLMs spend on HR tasks depends on their motivation to implement HR tasks: '*If you don't like doing something, than you don't spend time on*

it'. And third of all they connect the factor capacity to competencies by thinking that the majority of FLMs lack HR skills. The FLMs work inefficient on the HR tasks. When FLMs develop their HR skills, (s)he can do more HR tasks in the same amount of time.

The function of FLM is most of the time filled by internal recruitment. This is one of the causes FLMs lack HR skills, which results in inefficient dealing with HR tasks. The HR managers agree that the FLMs have to spend more time on HR tasks to perform as good as possible. The FLMs can divide their time more efficiently so they have more time left to spend on HR tasks. When FLMs develop their employees, they do not have to deal with small technical details and they can spend more time on people issues.
One of the HR managers thinks that at this moment the FLMs would not have enough time to perform all the HR tasks that the HR department asks them to do. The HR department feels like the FLMs blame the business side not to do the HR tasks.

All the HR managers explicitly said that FLMs have to spend more time on performance management. Most of the FLMs dislike this kind of management and do not spend time on it.
There are three other HR responsibilities which FLMs need to spend more time on according to the HR department. The first is communication of information about the employees to the HR department. The HR department expect the FLMs for example to address when someone is out of work, comes in too late or dresses inappropriately. The second HR responsibility which needs more time spending on it is coaching their employees. FLMs are expected to motivate and support all the employees during the day. This leads to the third responsibility: developing of employees. The HR department expects FLMs to know which employee needs which training courses and that they think about which training programs they should be involved in.

FLMs have to perform business issues and people issues. The literature review shows this can lead to a role overload of the FLMs. They can have the feeling that management asks too much of them. There is disagreement from the HR department about the role overload of the FLMs. Two HR managers believe role overload comes up at the FLMs. When the HR manager and the superior of the FLMs teach the FLMs how to perform well on HR tasks, the feeling can change.
The other two HR managers state that role overload with FLMs does not exist at SCHOTT US. One of those HR managers thinks that the HR department of SCHOTT does not hold the FLMs accountable for HR issues that elsewhere they would be held accountable for. This HR manager is convinced that the HR department of SCHOTT does far more than any other HR department. The other HR manager does not think FLM have the feeling management asks too much of them: '*When FLMs are not able to handle the work overload, the HR department is there to help them with performing HR responsibilities*'. The HR department tries to make clear that when the FLMs cannot handle the workload, they have to come to the HR department. The HR department can figure out if the FLM understands the HR tools, -programs, and –policy in order to use them efficiently. Furthermore the HR manager can assign the FLM to a time management or self management training course. Furthermore the HR managers teach the FLMs how to delegate tasks to their employees and to develop them. This will lead FLMs to be able to spend their time more efficiently so they will be able to spend more time on HR tasks.
That the FLMs cannot handle their business issues and people responsibilities is noticeable by the results of their work. Most of the FLMs are not able to balance both responsibilities. The FLMs show a poor performance on HR tasks and perform well on business tasks. All HR managers agree that the FLMs spend almost all their time on business issues, so the HR responsibilities keep following them.

4.3.3 Competencies
For performing well on HR responsibilities a manager needs several competencies. The competencies which are mentioned by the HR managers are:

- Knowledge of conflict management
- Being honest/ fair
- Communication skills
- Motivation to do the HR tasks
- Adaptability to change
- Ability to give and receive feedback
- Knowledge how to differentiate between team members
- Being unselfish
- motivation to be a leader,
- having people skills,
- knowledge of HR and their policy and procedures,
- some formal training and management skills and
- a clear understanding of the direction of the company.

The HR department expects FLMs to have a certain level of HR knowledge because of their experiences with SCHOTT US in the past. But all HR managers agree that the majority of the FLMs at SCHOTT US do not have all these skills, and if they have all the competencies, '*than they most of the time are not effective at it*', according to a HR manager. They think a lot of FLMs need to improve their skills or must be developed in order to achieve the HR related goals the HR department set for them. This can be done by following one of the training courses SCHOTT offers (see Appendix L: Training courses at SCHOTT US). FLMs can also follow a supervisory training course where they will be taught which HR tools they can use to supervise their employees. Not every manager has had this training course.

The competency which is most deficient according to the HR managers is knowledge about how to deal with conflict management. Two of the HR managers link the factor desire to the factor competencies by saying that the communication skills and the self-motivation of FLMs also must be developed in a short amount of time.

The opinion of the HR managers about the willingness of FLMs to learn new things can be divided into two groups. The first group is very positive and thinks that every employee within a company wants to do a good job and thereby is always willing to learn new things. They think that it is human nature to always want to learn new things. The second group is more negative and thinks that most of the FLMs do not have the motivation to learn new things, because they lack the adaptability to change. There are two HR managers who think that for what FLMs know and for what they perceive they need to do, they have a good effort. But both groups want to see more effort of the FLMs in general.

Most of the FLMs at SCHOTT US have experience with managing people. Because of their experiences before, the basic qualifications are available, otherwise they would not have been hired for the job. All HR managers agree that these experiences are relevant for their job as a FLM, but FLMs have to develop their skills. In order to do this, the company holds several training courses during the year (see attachment I: Training courses at SCHOTT US). For the most training courses the HR department or the managers of the FLMs mandate them to go, the skill training courses are voluntary. The intranet shows the training courses which are available and everybody can apply for it. For applying you need the approval of your manager. The HR department wants to be more proactive with promoting the training courses. They all see a causal relation between developing the HR skills of FLMs and their motivation. When FLMs do not have the willingness to perform better on HR tasks, they will not realize they lack the skills which are needed to perform well and they will not learn from the training course. But when a FLM learns how to handle people issues, he can become more motivated to implement the HR practices.

All the HR managers are of the opinion that the training courses are sufficient for performing HR responsibilities well. Although: '*Repetition is the best key to change a person's habits*'. With going to one training course this goals will not be achieved. This repetition is been given in some cases.
The HR managers are sure the training courses develop the skills of the employees. According to two HR managers the training courses have to improve. This can be done by making them more practical, by giving more practical examples. At this moment all training courses prioritize business issues and teach just a little about HR matters. This can be improved by organizing more HR related training courses.

4.3.4 Support

The HR department is sure that FLMs need support. The HR department and the managers of the FLMs are available for the FLMs to give support. This support includes giving advice to the FLMs.
The HR department tries to communicate to the work force that they will answer all questions and that they will help them with whatever they need. But they also know that they have to do a better job in creating this knowledge. At SCHOTT US there are no cross department meetings. The FLMs have meetings with their employees, and only when there is a HR issue which has to be solved a HR manager is involved. According to the HR managers, the FLMs need most support with conflict and performance management, because they are reluctant to perform these kinds of management and they do not know how to deal with them.

The support of HR involves answering all questions FLMs have. Some HR managers try to give support in an informal way and stop by and talk to the FLMs to find out if there are some issues. But most of the time the HR department is not proactive and the FLM has to come to the HR manager.
When an FLM comes to the HR department with an issue all HR managers tend to drop everything they are doing at that moment. It depends on the issue if they will solve it right away. When the issue is urgent, they will help immediately. When it is not urgent, they look at it later when they have more time for it. It also depends on how easy it is to solve an issue. A HR manager stated: '*Sometimes I have to come back to things, because I don't have all the knowledge. I would love to help immediately, but sometimes it is necessary to do research first*'. But when the issue is small, like a payment, this can be solved immediately.
When an issue has to be solved, the outset is the most challenging part for the HR department. They try to get the FLM started to solve the issue. After the start the FLM can go on by him-/ herself and get the ownership of the issue. The HR managers blame the FLMs if support comes too late. They agree that when this happens, the FLM had to come earlier to them with his or her problem.

Two HR managers thinks that there is a gap between the HR vision and the vision of the FLMs about the support FLMs get. HR managers perceive support as telling FLMs how to solve the problem, give them a step-by-step plan, and asking after a while if the problem has been solved. The FLMs perspective according to this HR manager is that they come with a problem to HR and HR will solve it for them, instead of they are sent back with some information which they do not see as support. In addition to the previous statement, another HR manager stated: '*Most FLMs do not want to be held accountable for the issue, so that's why they want HR to solve it for them*'.
Another HR manager thinks the HR department lacks giving the FLMs the basic tools and teaching those. At this moment HR managers help the FLMs with implementing those HR practices which the FLMs have difficulties with. So, in a team the FLMs know what to do and how to deal with HR issues, but individually they lack HR skills. When the HR department spends more time on development of the FLMs, they are able to solve more HR issues by themselves.

The HR managers intend to understand the issues FLMs perceive in performing HR responsibilities. When a FLM comes in with a problem, the HR managers try to find out what causes the problem. '*We listen to what they say, but we are seeking for the real problem*', thus a HR manager. One HR

manager thinks the FLM has to deal with so many different issues, that they are not able to know everything. And two HR managers think that most issues are caused by the fact FLMs do not feel comfortable to address the issue to HR and fix it. '*Maybe some FLMs are afraid to come to me, maybe some do not know what HR has to do with it, or maybe some think I will not understand their problem*', stated a HR manager.

The majority of the HR department prefers doing other tasks than giving support to the FLMs. One HR manager stated: '*I think I am more effective in doing other things than support the FLMs.*' Of course it depends on the issue which comes up. They prefer recruiting and hiring people over firing people and having difficult conversations, although they see a challenge in these situations. There is one HR manager who prefers supporting FLMs over his/ her other HR tasks: '*I owe it to them to be their support, I want to be their support, that's my job*'.

4.3.5 Policy and procedures

FLMs know they have to perform HR responsibilities because this is communicated by the HR department by sending an email and mentioning it during their job interview. SCHOTT US lacks updated job descriptions. They only make job descriptions to put on the internet when they are looking for new people. Everything an employee has to do is said in the recruitment process, but this can always change while they are working on the job. The tasks an employee has are also written down in the employee handbook (see Appendix M: Employee handbook of SCHOTT US), but this handbook is not up to date and it does not outline explicitly what is expected regarding HR practices. But the HR managers agree that this is an improvement area. HR knows they have to make their expectations more clear to the FLMs by explicitly inform them in several ways.

The tools and guidelines which SCHOTT US has available for FLMs to assist them performing their HR responsibilities which the HR managers could sum up are: a direction of the HR tools, the employee handbook, a supervisor handbook, compensation brochures, feedback forms, performance plan templates, a lot of other templates which guide FLMs their way through, policies in place that helps the FLMs determine what the company wants them to achieve, reference guide and a guideline how to compensate employees. These tools are listed in Appendix K: HR tools at SCHOTT US.
The problem is that the guidelines are not clear for the FLMs. One HR manager stated: 'Some FLMs might think the tools are unclear, do not fit together, there are too many, or that it is a waste of time using them, what causes the issues they perceive with implementing HR practices.'
At the moment there is no consistency with all managers at SCHOTT US in performing their HR responsibilities. Although the FLMs have the same guidelines available, they all interpret them differently. The HR department has the same expectations for all FLMs and they want them to reach these expectations. The HR managers allow individual interpretation of the guidelines when this leads to the same results. They know FLMs are smart enough to develop their own way through the guidelines. But the HR managers agree that more consistency will lead to better performance of the employees.

4.3.6 Other findings

The HR department perceives HR as a shared responsibility between the HR department and the managers.
They increasingly realize that FLMs perceive barriers with implementing HR practices and that they have to spend time on it in order to tackle those: '*It wasn't a big focus in the past, it is a bit at the foreground right now, because HR tried to push off more and we notice that it is not done properly*'.
To tackle the barriers, there is the suggestion for next year to include a HR goal in the yearly goal setting of the FLM. When this idea is implemented, the yearly evaluation of the FLM will be based on his/ her business performance ánd HR performance.

By pushing more HR tasks to the FLMs, the HR managers have time left to spend on more important things according to the HR managers, like the development of an effective program for solving these barriers, which does not exist at the moment.

From the vision of the HR managers a sixth factor occurred: 'accountability'. This factor is strongly related to the factors desire and capacity. When a FLM is held accountable for performing HR tasks, (s)he will be more motivated to perform these tasks. Furthermore (s)he is more willing to spend time on these tasks. This barrier can be solved by the goal setting suggestion for next year: the FLM can get a bonus when (s)he performed well on HR performance.

4.3.7 Conclusions

The factor which all HR managers perceive as the biggest barrier for FLMs to implement HR responsibilities is desire. Two managers mentioned also competencies, because in their perception this factor influences all the other factors. When someone is not good in performing on HR tasks, (s)he will not be motivated to do it, (s)he do not want to make the time for it, (s)he has to ask all the support which is available and (s)he needs clear policy and procedures to know what is expected from him/ her.
One of the HR managers mentioned capacity as a big barrier too. In his/ her perception the factor capacity and desire go hand-in-hand. This HR managers thinks that motivation is a result of a lack of time and that if a FLM is motivated enough (s)he will find the time to work on the HR responsibilities. According to the HR managers the underlying factor which may cause the five barriers is communication. The communication between the HR department and the work floor is not as good as it can be at this moment and there is room for improvement.

Chapter 5: Discussion

In this part of the report the results from the HR managers and the FLMs will be compared with each other and with the theory. This chapter will discuss the participants views on the barriers. Table 5 provides an overview of the differences and similarities between the opinions of the HR managers and the FLMs on the barriers which could be perceived with implementing HR practices by FLMs. In the following paragraphs these views will be elaborated per factor.

	Views on barriers with implementing HR practices by FLMs	
	HR managers	First-line managers
Desire	- FLMs are a-motivated to perform HR tasks. - Performing HR responsibilities can be value adding, if done properly. - FLMs have to chose people issues over business issues. - FLMs are better at motivating the people on the work floor than HR managers are.	- FLMs are extrinsic motivated to perform HR tasks. - Performing HR responsibilities is value added, especially to supervise their team and to help the people in their team to grow. - FLMs chose business issues over people issues. - FLMs are better in motivating the people on the work floor than HR managers are.
Capacity	- FLMs have to spend at least 50% of their time on people issues. - FLMs have time enough to spend on HR issues, but they have to prioritize tasks differently. - FLMs have to spend more time on addressing employee information to the HR department. - FLMs have to spend more time on performance management. - FLMs do not feel a role overload, because HR supports them if they do not have the time to perform their HR tasks.	- FLMs have to spend between 'as little as possible' and 50 % of their time on people issues. - FLMs have to perform HR responsibilities hastily and less carefully in order to get everything done. - FLMs spend least time on administrative tasks. - FLMs spend most time on having performance conversations with employees and managing their people. - FLMs do not feel a role overload, because they spend enough time on HR practices at the moment.
Competencies	- FLMs do not have enough skills to achieve the HR goals set by the HR department - Experiences as a manager are relevant for performing HR practices. - Experience with HR issues are insufficient to perform HR practices effectively. - FLMs lack conflict management skills, communication skills, and self-motivation. - Training courses are relevant. - Training courses are sufficient, but there have to be more possibilities to repetition. - FLMs have to be more motivated to follow the training courses. - The HR managers need to be more proactive with promoting the training courses.	- FLMs have enough HR knowledge to deal with the HR tasks they have to perform, but it can be improved. - Experiences as a manager are relevant for performing HR practices. - 50% of the FLMs state that their experiences with HR issues are sufficient to perform HR practices effectively. - FLMs lack technical HR knowledge, and conflict management skills. - 9 FLMs followed training courses. - 4 FLMs stated that the training courses are relevant. - 3 FLMs stated that the training courses are sufficient. - FLMs are not motivated to follow training courses. - The HR managers need to be more proactive with promoting the training courses.
Support	- If support of HR comes too late, it is because FLMs came too late to the HR department. - Support is sufficient, but must be more proactive. - 2 HR managers: FLMs are not comfortable to address the issue to the HR department. - HR understands the specific problems FLMs have to deal with.	- If support of HR comes too late, it is because HR is not proactive enough with giving advice. - 3 FLMs: support is insufficient - HR managers are reliable and responsive and sincerely interested in solving the problems. - HR does not understand the specific problems FLMs have to deal with.
Policy and procedures	- Expectations of HR for FLMs are clear. - The HR policy and procedures are communicated by email, mentioning it during the job interview and handing out the employee handbook. - The HR policies and guidelines are compatible.	- Expectations of HR for FLMs are unclear. - The expectations are badly communicated. - Guidelines are clear - Some FLMs have the feeling they have to work under incompatible HR policies and guidelines.

The results of the questionnaire and the interviews sometimes varied significantly. The FLMs were more explicit during the interviews and had a clearer opinion. In the questionnaire they were more neutral. This can be caused by the fact that the interviews were held before the questionnaire was distributed. During the interview the FLMs were confronted with questions about their HR responsibilities for the first time. It was the first time they could anonymously give their opinion and express themselves critically to the HR department. This might cause a strong opinion. Probably after the interview the emotions were less intense and they were more neutral.

This difference can also be caused by the different way of asking the questions. At an interview I was able to ask supplementary questions when the answer was too short, unclear, or when I thought the FLM had a more clear opinion. When the FLM filled out the questionnaire, I was not there to explain certain things, or to ask the FLM to really think the answers through, so the FLM was more inclined to answer neutrally. Furthermore, the FLMs made time free for the interviews and they were focused on giving answers. It might be that most FLMs filled out the questionnaire in a little moment of spare time, which causes less attention and because of that more neutral answers.

Finally, the questions of the interviews were open questions and because of that the FLMs could give a clear opinion and explain what they thought. The questions of the questionnaire were closed, so the FLMs gave their opinion, but could not explain why they gave that answer.

The role of FLMs at SCHOTT US has been changed over the last years. They are increasingly involved in work performance and quality rather than detailed micro-management of processes what is devolved to team members.

The intention of SCHOTT US is that the HR department has a total strategic role. The HR managers must still devolve some operational tasks in order to focus complete on the strategic side of HR. Furthermore, the devolvement of more tasks will lead to a business driven partnership between line management and HR management to improve performance and contribute together to achieve business goals.

5.1 Barriers

In this paragraph every barrier will be discussed. I will indicate the differences between the views of the HR managers and the FLMs on these barriers and involve the literature and my own opinion.

5.1.1 Desire

HR managers make a distinction between motivated and a-motivated FLMs. The first group they described, is according to the literature intrinsically motivated. The second group has been described with the words: '*These FLMs do their HR tasks because they have to, they do not have a passion for it*'. According to the HR managers these FLMs are a-motivated, but according to the literature they are extrinsically motivated. They are motivated to do their HR tasks by incentives from outside. Just a couple of FLMs are a-motivated and really do not know why they have to perform their HR tasks.

According to the theory most line managers are not motivated to take on the new responsibilities (Hope Hailey, Farndale & Truss, 2005). The FLMs of SCHOTT US disagree with this statement. The majority is motivated (with an average of 3.71) and knows that performing HR responsibilities is value added, especially to supervise their team and to help the people in their team to grow. The HR managers and the FLMs agree with the theory that motivating and stimulating their team is important and will help them achieve their business goals.

As the theory of Whittaker & Marchington (2003) showed, the majority of the FLMs chose business issues over people issues. With the devolution of HR tasks from the HR department to the FLMs, the FLMs have more tasks to fulfil in the same amount of time. The FLMs need to prioritize their tasks. These priorities differ from those of the HR department. The HR managers expect them to fulfil a more team-coordinating role rather than to deal with micro-management of processes which is devolved to team members. The HR managers of SCHOTT US want the FLMs to chose people issues over business issues, but, in my opinion, they do not have to. The FLMs are firstly hired because of

their technical knowledge. They are very good in performing their business and they really enjoy that part of their job. FLMs do not have any education for HRM. As line managers have many other pressing priorities in addition to managing and developing the people working for them, it is likely that 'people management' issues will be taken less seriously than production or service goals. However, even those managers who were sympathetic to the ideals of high commitment HRM found it hard to maintain "best practice" approaches in the face of business pressures that demanded their attention and for which they were rewarded. In my opinion FLMs do not have to prefer people issues over business issues, but they have to perform their HR tasks properly.

The HR managers do not think the FLMs perform as well as they could perform, but when they do, they can be a huge contribution to the organization. The HR managers and the FLMs agree that the FLMs are better in motivating the employees than the HR managers are, because FLMs are more involved with the issues on the work floor.

5.1.2 Capacity

FLMs need time to implement HR practices. As we have seen in the literature the short-term nature of managerial activity leads to a tendency to put a greater priority on the achievement of the numbers (McGovern, Gratton, Hope Hailey, Stiles, Truss, 1997). The priority of FLMs at SCHOTT US is on business issues too. The FLMs spend between 'as little as possible' and 50 percent of their time on HR tasks. Two of the HR managers want them to spend at least 50 percent of their time on people issues. Only two FLMs are willing to spend more time on people issues, the other FLMs already think they spend enough time or they can spend less time on it. The FLMs say they seem to catch up with performing their HR tasks, but five of them have the feeling they have to perform HR responsibilities hastily and less carefully in order to get everything done. The HR managers can argue this opinion by connecting the factor desire and competencies to the factor capacity. They state that if the FLMs are more motivated to perform HR practices and if they really like performing HR responsibilities, they will spend more time on it. Furthermore the HR managers state that the majority of FLMs lack HR skills, through which they work inefficient on the HR tasks. When FLMs develop their HR skills, they can do more HR tasks in the same amount of time.

FLMs spend least time on administrative tasks. This is noticed by the HR managers, who want them to spend more time on administrative tasks, such as addressing employee information to the HR department. FLMs spend most time on having performance conversations with employees and managing their people. They think performing this task is important, because it helps them with motivating and stimulating their team, which has already been showed by the factor desire. However, the amount of time spend on these HR tasks is not enough according to the HR department. They want the FLMs to spend more time on performance management.

So, the FLMs prefer spending time on the soft (employee motivation, commitment and development) HR issues instead of the hard (measurable) HR issues (Kane, Crawford & Grant, 1999). This outcome is striking. FLMs are used to work numbered driven, they want tangible results, and still they prefer performing soft HR practices, although these practices will not directly show tangible results. In my opinion the FLMs do not see the contribution they would make in performing the hard HR tasks. For them HR administration is just a distraction from important business issues and they want HR to perform this task, because in their opinion HR managers can do the same thing faster, they studied for it, and they are interested in it.

FLMs do not have the feeling of role overload. They think they spend enough time on HR tasks in order to achieve optimal results. But at the same time they agree that they do not have enough hours in the day to perform all their tasks optimally. This shows again that FLMs prioritize business issues over people issues. They think that the time they spend on HR tasks at the moment is enough, but they want more time to spend on their business tasks. I think that when FLMs agree that effective implementation of HR practices will contribute to the success of their team, they would spend more time on HR tasks, feel more pressure on the performance of these

tasks and might feel a role overload. At this moment they perform those HR practices which they think are a contribution to their business success, for example motivating their team and having performance conversations. They do not perform other HR tasks, as administration, as well as they could. The HR department of SCHOTT US do not hold the FLMs accountable for HR tasks; when a FLM is not able to handle the workload, the HR department will help them to perform their HR responsibilities. In my opinion, if the HR managers want the FLMs to prefer people issues over business issues, this attitude of the HR department does not help. When the FLMs are held accountable for their HR tasks, when the FLMs are rewarded for good HR performance and punished for bad HR performance, the FLMs will prioritize people issues more than at this moment. At this moment the FLMs know that when they don't have time to spend on the HR practices they actually have to implement, the HR department will help them. So, there is no pressure on the FLMs to perform HR practices, which can be changed by a different attitude of the HR department.

5.1.3 Competencies

Twelve of the FLMs have experiences with implementing HR practices. FLMs are partly selected on the basic of these experience, so the basic HR knowledge is available. FLMs agree they have enough HR knowledge to deal with the HR tasks they have to perform, but it can be improved. The HR department disagrees with the FLMs on this point, they state that the FLMs do not have enough skills to achieve the HR goals set by the HR department. This gap might be caused by the fact that the FLMs have other thoughts about what they have to perform according to HR practices. When they perform all the HR tasks the HR department want them to do, they might perceive their knowledge as a hindrance in performing these tasks. In addition the HR managers and the FLMs think that experience is relevant for performing their HR tasks. The HR department thinks this experience is insufficient, 50 percent of the FLMs agree. FLMs said they lack technical knowledge of HR most and they also want to develop their skills to manage conflicts. The HR department says the FLMs lack skills of conflict management, communication, and self-motivation. This last item is expressed by the willingness of FLMs to follow a training course. According to the FLMs they are not motivated to follow a training course, but when they followed one, they are surprised about the knowledge they gained. Furthermore four of the nine FLMs who followed a training course thought it was relevant and only three thought it was sufficient. When this opinion spreads out in the office, the motivation of other FLMs to join a training course will decrease. The HR department thinks that following the training courses is sufficient for performing HR responsibilities well, although there have to be more possibilities to repeat these courses. They also want to see more effort of the FLMs in the desire to develop themselves. The HR managers admit they should be more proactive with promoting the training courses, but for them the first step to develop the FLMs is to change the motivation of the FLMs.

According to the HR managers the training courses are relevant and sufficient, although repetition would be better. At this moment the training courses content especially business issues, even the training courses to develop skills accents how to use the skills with business issues. The FLMs would like to have an internal training course of SCHOTT US which explicitly explains the technical HR knowledge of SCHOTT US.

In my opinion the HR managers have to improve communication about the importance of the role of FLMs to the FLMs. The FLMs really have to understand what the impact of effective HR practices is on the business success and that it is a contribution to SCHOTT US that the FLMs perform the HR tasks which are devolved, despite of the fact that HR managers studied to perform these tasks and are faster in performing these tasks. When this is known, they are motivated to develop themselves and they will gain more knowledge because of the training courses. Of course this counts for the majority and there are certain FLMs who are motivated to follow the training courses and learn a lot.

5.1.4 Support

The FLMs get most support from the HR department, their supervisors and their secretary. The HR department supports by advising the FLMs. They also try to support in an informal way by walking by and asking how everything is going, but they admit they have to improve in this proactive way of giving support and that they have to do a better job in creating the knowledge that HR will support the FLMs when needed. Despite the knowledge of the HR department that they have to be more proactive, they blame the FLMs when support came too late. They argue that when support is too late, it is because of the FLM who asked for support too late.

The FLMs agree that HR supports them, but four FLMs want the HR department to be more authoritarian and to give stronger support. Furthermore, they dislike that they always have to be proactive to get it. Seven FLMs think the support of HR is sufficient and three FLMs think it is insufficient. The HR department tends to drop everything when an employee needs help and the FLMs also realize this.

Two HR managers think FLMs are not comfortable to address the issue to the HR department and fix it. Two FLMs agree, but the majority thinks that the HR managers are reliable and responsiveness and sincerely interested in solving their problem. This gap can be caused by insecurity of the HR department, which can be caused by the short service time of two HR managers at SCHOTT US. They know that they still lack some HR knowledge and might think that FLMs perceive this as a barrier to come to them with a problem. In the interviews two FLMs agreed with this thought.

The FLMs agree least that HR managers understand the specific problems FLMs have. Contrary to the FLMs, the HR managers think they understand the issues FLMs have to deal with. I think this gap is caused by the way HR managers give their support. When a FLM comes to the HR department with a problem, (s)he wants it to be solved as fast as possible. The HR managers are looking for the cause of the problem and might see for example that the FLM needs to develop his/ her skills to deal with conflict. They will advise the FLM first to solve the problem in a certain way, but also that (s)he has to follow a training course, or has to work on some skills. So, during a conversation in which a FLM asks for help, (s)he will be criticized, too. FLMs might not realize that they need this development and do not prioritize this, because (s)he has to deal with a lot of other issues too. This gap in vision how to solve a problem is foreseen by the HR managers, but the results of the questionnaire and interviews with the FLMs did not show this gap. The FLMs think that the HR department is interested in them and polite and tries to help them.

The factor support can be linked to desire and competencies. According to the literature HR managers can affect the motivation and competencies of first-line managers by giving support in a good way. Good support of the HR department leads to good performance of FLMs, which can turn into improvement of the business results. If the FLMs link the better business results to the better performance in HR tasks, they might become more motivated to perform their HR tasks. Besides, a good support by HR managers can lead to better HR skills of FLMs, which also might result in better business performance.

The other way around, the HR managers need the willingness to support the FLMs and according to three HR managers, giving support is not what they prefer to do.

5.1.5 Policy and procedures

The fact that FLMs are not involved in HR policy making can cause them a lack of knowledge about the background of HR policy and procedures. The HR policy and procedures are than unclear, which means the FLMs have the feeling that they have to work under incompatible HR policies and guidelines, they have to work in a different way than the most efficient way, or they have to work with two groups or more who operate quite differently in performing HR responsibilities. The HR managers want more consistency in performing HR practices by FLMs. This might be done by

involving the FLMs in HR policy making. Six FLMs want to be more involved, certainly when it concerns their own business segment.

This confusion can also be caused by the communication of the policy and procedures by the HR department to the FLMs. The HR department sends out emails with procedures and mentions the HR tasks at the job interview. According to the FLMs this communication is not performed well. The FLMs know what is expected from them mostly by their own experience and certain things they know by the HR department and their supervisors. Most of the FLMs have a job description, but it does not include what is expected from them according to their HR responsibilities. A group of four FLMs think the expectations are unclear and a group of four thinks these are clear, the other FLMs are neutral. This division can first of all be caused by the span of control. The insecure FLMs have the biggest span of control. They might have to deal with more HR issues than FLMs with a smaller span of control, therefore they want to know in more detail what is expected from them in order to manage their people well. Secondly it can be caused by their work experience with SCHOTT US. The FLMs who felt insecure had experiences as a manager prior to their present function, but in that position they did not take care of Human Resource based issues. They also worked for a relatively short time at SCHOTT US. Because the expectations are unclear, every FLM interprets the guidelines differently and there is no consistency with all FLMs at SCHOTT US in performing their HR responsibilities. The HR department is aware of the inconsistency with the FLMs and that they have to inform the FLMs in several ways.

In short, at this moment FLMs are insecure about the expectations of the HR department. One FLM stated: '*I need stricter rules and more authority from the HR department*'.

All FLMs agree they receive HR assignments with adequate resources and materials to execute it. Most of the FLMs agreed that the guidelines they get, help them with performing their HR responsibilities, which is also said in the literature (Gennard & Kelly, 1997). And they all think their work on things in performing their HR responsibilities is necessary. This opinion is contrary to how the FLMs act. On the one hand they find performing their HR responsibilities is important, but on the other hand they do not want to perform all the HR tasks, despite of the fact that they realize these tasks are important. Furthermore the HR managers want them to spend more time on these tasks, but the FLMs are not willing to do this. In my opinion the FLMs realize that the HR tasks are important, they really think these tasks make a positive contribution to the organization, but they do not agree that they have to perform these tasks. They want the HR managers to perform these tasks and are still under the impression that these tasks belong to the HR department.

5.1.6 Other findings

The HR department sees a shared responsibility between the HR department and the FLMs. In order to reach this, the FLMs need more clarity. At this moment they are insecure about the expectations of the HR department, through which they cannot share the HR responsibilities. This barrier of confusion can be caused by the underlying factor: communication. In addition the HR managers as the FLMs are not satisfied how the communication between the two groups of managers is at SCHOTT US. In my opinion good communication between the two groups might solve this barrier.

According to the HR department, including a HR goal in the yearly goal setting of the FLMs can solve some barriers. First, when the FLMs are rewarded for performing their HR practices, they are more willing to perform these tasks. Secondly, they want to develop themselves more in order to perform better. To perform better, they have to spend more time on HR issues. Finally, they have to understand the HR policy and procedures, so they might lose oneself in these procedures, through which the policy and procedures will become more clear than those are at this moment and the implementation of HR practices will be more effective.

Other hindrances perceived by the FLMs are the inability to reward their employees financially more than once a year in order to motivate them more. According to the Two-factor Theory of Herzberg (1968) motivation comes from the nature of the job itself, not from external rewards or job conditions. Jobs aspects which are relevant to motivate the employees are achievement, recognition, responsibility, and the nature of the work itself. Pay, supervision, co-workers, and organizational policies are 'hygiene factors'. The way to motivate employees and make them satisfied with their jobs is to provide appropriate levels of motivator factors. Hygiene factors, no matter how favorable, cannot lead to motivation or satisfaction with work. So, according to Herzberg, the FLMs at SCHOTT US need to learn how to motivate their people in a different way than by rewarding their employees with more pay. But, this theory does not apply to all employees. When the hygiene factors are fulfilled, the employees will be neutral (so not satisfied). The employees need first wages which fit their job, when they are underpaid they will not be motivated at all to perform. I already showed that FLMs are extrinsically motivated to perform their tasks, the same might go for the employees of the FLMs. In order to motivate them, they need to have incentives from outside (i.e. money) to perform their tasks. So, in my opinion, extra rewarding by money may motivate the employees in first instance and on the short term, but the FLMs need to motivate in other ways too.

The HR managers came up with a sixth factor: accountability. FLMs are the first level in a vertical system of individual accountability in which managers, not workers, were accountable for work outcomes. The core areas of accountability, attaching to the FLM role are quality, efficiency, output, discipline and paperwork (Hales, 2005). When the FLMs are held accountable for tasks, they will perform better. For example at this moment the FLMs at SCHOTT US are rewarded for their business performance and not for their HR performance; they are accountable for the success of the segment they are working in. Through this they will spend as much time as possible on business tasks. This will work the same way if they are held accountable for HR performance.
Hales (2005) researched the amount of authority of FLMs and in which amount FLMs are accountable. He found that there was evident disparity between FLM's accountability and authority, with FLMs in many organizations not given the authority to determine the things for which they were accountable. AT SCHOTT US the FLMs have to perform HR tasks, because it is part of their job. But they are not accountable for the outcomes of these tasks, only indirectly they will notice that when they do not implement the HR responsibilities correctly, the business results will be worse. According to the HR department including a HR goal in the yearly goal setting of the FLMs can also take care of more accountability for the FLMs. Also when the FLMs are more involved in HR policy making, they can have influence on organizational decisions through which they have more authority on outcomes.

The HR department of SCHOTT US perceives desire as the biggest barrier, in contradiction to the FLMs of whom nobody perceives this factor as a barrier. This disparity can be caused by the fact that FLMs are extrinsic motivated to perform their HR tasks. They are not educated to perform HR tasks, they do not prioritize HR tasks and they do not really realize how important effective HR tasks can be. FLMs are used to get tangible results out of their tasks. With implementing HR practices, they will receive non-tangible results, this may cause an a-motivation. In my opinion desire is a barrier, but it can be solved, because despite of the source of motivation, the FLMs are motivated to perform HR tasks, and they know performing HR tasks is value added. However this knowledge is not enough for FLMs to be intrinsic motivated. When they would realize what the impact of effective implementation of HR practices would be on the business results, they would be more motivated to perform the HR tasks.

The FLMs of SCHOTT US perceive the factors policy & procedure and capacity as the biggest barrier. I think that the policy and procedures of SCHOTT US are not directly the barrier, but the communication of the policy and procedures from the HR department to the FLMs is the barrier. The

comments on this factor is that the policy and procedures are unclear and that the FLMs do not know what is expected from them. This can be solved by a better communication between the managers. Capacity as the biggest barrier is a striking result. When we just look at the results from the interviews and the questionnaire, capacity is not seen as a barrier by FLMs. The fact that they chose this barrier as the biggest, might be caused by the insight they acquired during the interview. At the end, after they discussed all barriers, they agreed that capacity causes the other barriers. Because of a lack of time, they cannot get into the HR tasks, through which the HR practices might be unclear, they cannot perform them as well as possible and they do not get advantage out of them. If FLMs have more time to spend on HR tasks, they will probably be more motivated to perform these tasks. One HR manager also called capacity as the biggest barrier.

Finally I would like to discuss previous research on this topic. This is the first research which examines the view of as well HR managers as FLMs on the barriers which may be perceived with implementing HR practices by FLMs. It seemed that these views differ. Previous research is based only on the view of the HR managers, therefore it is possible to have doubts about the applicability of these theories. If previous researchers also took the opinion of FLMs in consideration the conclusions of these researches might differ.

Chapter 6: Conclusions and recommendations

In this chapter conclusions will be drawn and recommendations will be given. The conclusions will give answers to the sub questions and finally on the research question. After the conclusions I will formulate recommendations to SCHOTT US and finally I will give some recommendations for further research.

6.1 Conclusions

The literature showed five barriers which can be perceived by first-line managers when implementing HR practices: desire, capacity, competencies, support, and policy and procedures.

6.1.1 Barriers perceived by FLMs of SCHOTT US

Desire is not a barrier which is perceived by FLMs at SCHOTT US when implementing HR practices. FLMs are extrinsic motivated to perform their HR responsibilities. They agree that performing HR practices helps people in their team to grow and helps them to supervise their team. The FLMs are insecure about the influence of HR performance on their business goals. From the questionnaire it seems that FLMs agree, with an average of 4.16, that motivation and connecting with their team is important and helps them to achieve their performance goals, but they do not realize that the other HR tasks might help them too. Eleven FLMs choose business issues over people issues.

In the first instance FLMs at SCHOTT US do not perceive capacity as a barrier. They think they spend enough time on HR tasks in order to achieve optimal results and none of the FLMs cancels their commitments to their HR responsibilities. They do not have the feeling of role overload. However at the end of the interview the majority of the FLMs stated capacity as the biggest barrier. This might be caused by the insight they acquired during the interview. After they discussed all barriers, they agreed that capacity might cause the other barriers. Because of a lack of time, they cannot get deeply involved in the HR tasks, the HR practices might be unclear, they cannot perform them as well as possible and they do not get advantage out of them.

The FLMs agree that they have enough HR knowledge for what they need to deal with, but they all agree that it can be improved in order to be more effective in performing HR practices. The quantitative analysis demonstrated that the experience FLMs have with HR tasks is relevant for performing their HR responsibilities, but not sufficient. Three of the nine FLMs who followed the training courses think that these were sufficient and relevant, but they all need repetition. The FLMs need more technical HR knowledge. They need an explanation of the HR guidelines and practices and they want more background information when something changes according to the HR policy and procedures.

Support is not perceived as a big barrier by the majority of FLMs at SCHOTT US. Most support they get comes from the HR department, supervisors and secretaries. These support sources do not come to the FLMs to explain how they can deal with HR tasks or to ask if they have problems with something, the FLMs have to be proactive to receive the support. The medical service department and work council are unknown as support sources by most of the FLMs. Most FLMs agree that the HR department is reliable and responsive, that they are interested in solving their problem, is self-confident and have empathy. However there is a group of FLMs who lack confidence in the HR department. Furthermore the FLMs agree least that the HR managers understand the specific problems line managers have. FLMs need most support with legal matters and in performing HR responsibilities and how to use the HR instruments.

The FLMs perceive policies and procedures as a big barrier. Overall the HR policy and procedures are not clear, which is mostly caused by the bad communication of these policies and procedures by the HR department to the FLMs. They lack a job description, which explains the HR

expectations, and they are not involved in policy making, because of this the majority of the FLMs do not know what is expected of them in performing their HR responsibilities. About half of the FLMs feel a certain amount of role conflict and have the feeling they have to work under incompatible HR policies and HR guidelines. Furthermore there is a feeling of role ambiguity for a part of the FLMs. The majority know what their HR responsibilities are, but they do not know what has to be done in performing HR responsibilities. The majority does not find the guidelines helpful and needs more guidance from HR.

In addition to the five barriers which are found in the literature the FLMs perceived other hindrances. They want to be able to reward their employees more than once a year and they want more opportunities to develop themselves. They also perceive the communication between the HR department and the FLMs as a barrier.

6.1.2 Barriers perceived by the HR managers of SCHOTT US

The HR managers perceive the motivation of FLMs as the biggest challenge. They think FLMs are not motivated, because they are accustomed to seeing end results, and by performing HR responsibilities the FLMs will get non-tangible results.

Capacity is not perceived as a barrier by the HR managers with implementing HR practices by FLMs. They assume that the FLMs can divide their time efficiently in order to have more spare time to spend on HR tasks. The HR managers want the FLMs to spend more time on HR tasks than they are currently spending. Two HR managers presume that role overload leads to the fact that FLMs do not spend enough time on HR issues.

Competencies might be a barrier with implementing HR practices according to the HR managers. The FLMs at SCHOTT US have the basic HR skills available because of experiences from prior functions. The HR managers agree that these experiences are not sufficient and that the majority of the FLMs lack HR competencies. The competency lacking most is the knowledge of how to deal with conflict management. By following training courses the competencies can be improved or developed and according to the HR managers following these training courses is sufficient to perform HR responsibilities well.

The HR managers see some room for improvement in giving support. The HR managers think they understand the specific problems FLMs have to deal with and they tend to drop everything when a FLM needs support. The majority of the HR department prefers doing other tasks than giving support to the FLMs, but they know it is part of the job and they want the FLMs to know that they are always available to give support, and that they are willing to help the FLMs.

The factor policy and procedures is not perceived as a barrier by the HR managers. They think there are enough guidelines to help FLMs with implementing HR practices, and that they are clear, but they are not well communicated to the FLMs. The HR managers inform the FLMs about their expectations by sending out emails and mentioning it during the job interviews. However, in the course of time the HR policy and procedures change, which has to be communicated to the FLMs. The HR managers agree that they have to make their expectations more clear from time to time.

From the perspective of the HR managers a sixth factor exists: accountability. When FLMs are held accountable for performing HR tasks, they will be more motivated to implement HR practices effectively. Besides, they are willing to spend more time on the HR tasks. According to the HR department the underlying factor which may cause the barriers with implementing HR practices is the communication between the HR managers and the FLMs.

So, HR managers foresee some hindrances which can be perceived with implementing HR practices by FLMs. From their view the FLMs are not motivated, they have to prioritize their tasks differently, that the FLMs lack competencies, and that the HR policy and procedures are

not well communicated to the FLMs. Despite their thoughts about these barriers, at this moment they do not do anything to reduce these.

6.1.3 Differences in views

All managers perceive barriers with implementing HR practices. The views of the HR managers and the FLMs on these barriers differ.
The HR managers state that some FLMs are a-motivated to perform their HR tasks. Actually it seems that these FLMs are extrinsically motivated, so they perform those tasks for which they are rewarded. At this moment the FLMs are rewarded for their business tasks, so that is why they prioritize business issues over people issues.
The FLMs think they spend enough time on the HR tasks, but the HR department would like to see more effort. The FLMs spend time on the HR tasks which they think contributes to their business goals, such as motivating their team and having performance conversations. They will not spend time on HR tasks which, according to the FLMs, do not contribute to their business goals. The amount of time FLMs spend on HR tasks, might be a matter of priorities.
The HR experiences and skills which FLMs have, is according to both groups not sufficient for performing the HR tasks effectively and therefore have to improve. The training courses which are meant to develop the HR skills of FLMs are, according to some FLMs, not sufficient and relevant. The HR managers think these training courses are sufficient and relevant, although they think that repetition is needed.
The FLMs need to be proactive to get the support of HR managers. They dislike this and the HR managers know that they have to improve. Although two HR managers are insecure about their ability to give support, the majority of the FLMs are satisfied with the support HR managers give. There is a gap between the HR managers' view and that of the FLMs' on the problems which can be perceived by FLMs. The HR managers think they understand the specific problems FLMs have to deal with, the FLMs disagree.
Both the HR managers and the FLMs perceive the policies and procedures as a barrier with implementing HR practices. The FLMs say they lack knowledge about the background of HR policy and procedures. Some FLMs have the feeling they have to work under incompatible HR policies and guidelines, they have to work in a different way than the most efficient way, or they have to work with two groups or more who operate quite differently in performing HR responsibilities. In short, the FLMs think the HR policy and procedures are unclear. In contrast with the HR managers, who think the HR guidelines and procedures are clear, but not well communicated to the FLMs, which causes the fact that the FLMs think the HR guidelines and procedures are unclear.
Finally, the HR department perceives desire as the biggest barrier, in contrast with the FLMs, who perceive policy and procedures and capacity as the biggest barrier.

6.1.4 Answer to the research question

Paragraphs 6.1.1 till 6.1.3 addressed the sub questions. Since these questions have been answered I can formulate an answer on the research question:

Which barrier is perceived as most hindering with implementing HR practices for FLMs and for HR managers at SCHOTT US?

The quantitative results showed that policy and procedures is the biggest barrier for the FLMs to effectively implement the HR practices. Some FLMs experience role conflict, and the feeling of role ambiguity exists too. Most FLMs have problems with interpreting the HR policy and procedures and they lack planned goals and objectives. Although the FLMs also perceive capacity as a barrier for implementing HR practices, the results do not support this. Almost all FLMs say they have time and energy to perform their HR responsibilities and none of the FLMs ever cancel commitments to their

HR responsibilities. However, sometimes they have the feeling that there are not have enough hours in the day to optimally perform all tasks asked of them, but from the interviews it seemed that this is because they have a very busy job with performing their business tasks.

Desire is the biggest barrier from the perspective of the HR managers. They link all barriers to the desire factor. They argue that when the FLMs do not have the willingness to perform their HR responsibilities, they do not want to spend time on it, they do not want to develop their HR skills, they will not ask for support and they do not want to spend time on getting into the HR policy and procedures.

Out of the report I can conclude that the five factors are linked and all barriers exist in certain amount at SCHOTT US.

The factor desire is a barrier in a certain amount. The FLMs are extrinsic motivated to perform their HR tasks, instead of intrinsic. So they need incentives from outside in order to perform their HR tasks effectively.

Capacity might be a barrier at SCHOTT US. FLMs have many other pressing priorities than managing and developing the people working for them. They have not devolved all the business tasks to their team, so they have to perform more tasks than in the past in the same amount of time.

The competencies of the FLMs are a barrier. This barrier is not perceived as big at the moment, but this might become bigger. At this moment the FLMs at SCHOTT US have just enough HR skills to deal with the HR tasks they have to deal with. But in the next couple of years, the HR managers will devolve more HR tasks to the FLMs and in order to implement those HR practices effectively, they need better developed HR skills.

The factor support in itself is not a barrier, but the nature of the support is. The FLMs expect a different kind of support than the HR department gives. Furthermore, they want the HR department to be more proactive, with which the HR department agrees.

Finally, the factor policy and procedure is also a barrier at SCHOTT US. The HR guidelines and procedures are not well communicated and therefore perceived as unclear.

An additional barrier which is perceived by the HR managers is accountability. Because the FLMs at SCHOTT US are not held accountable for the HR practices they have to implement, the other barriers might arise.

6.2 Recommendations

The conclusions showed the barriers which are perceived at SCHOTT US. To eliminate or reduce these barriers SCHOTT US can undertake certain actions.

   10. Improve the communication between the HR department and the FLMs.
The underlying factor of the hindrances between the HR department and the FLMs is caused by poor communication. Poor communication will cause obscurity of the expectations from both sides, which in turn will cause difficulties between the managers. To improve the communication, the HR department can organize a periodic meeting where both parties give feedback about the last period, explain what their expectations are for the coming period, and what is new in their business segment. Because of this, the HR department and the FLMs stay in touch and unclear items can be resolved immediately. Furthermore the HR department has to communicate more face to face with the FLMs instead of via the email. This might lead to get to know the FLMs and their business better and to create a feeling of trust with the FLMs.

   11. Create a shared knowledge and understanding about the importance of the HR role of FLMs.
FLMs need to realize the importance of them implementing HR practices and what the contribution is to the organization when they implement HR practices effectively. Firstly, this understanding will

lead to more intrinsic motivation to perform their HR tasks. Secondly, they are willing to perform better on the HR tasks, because this will lead to better business results, so they are more willing to develop their HR skills. Finally, they will probably spend more time on performing their HR responsibilities.

This knowledge can be created by showing facts. These facts can be for example the differences of the business results with and without effective HR implementation by FLMs, or the differences between the effects which can be reached on the work floor by the HR managers and the FLMs.

The HR department has to show the FLMs that they have more influences on the work floor, that they have the knowledge about their team members and that this is the reason why they are more effective in implementing certain HR tasks than the HR department is. The HR department has to let the FLMs know that they are important.

12. Add a HR goal to the yearly goal setting of the FLMs.

By setting a yearly HR goal for FLMs, the FLMs will be rewarded for their HR results as well as their business results. This will be effective, because the FLMs are extrinsically motivated to perform their HR tasks. Besides, it might solve the barrier accountability. By adding HR goals to the yearly goal setting the FLMs are held accountable for the implementation of HR practices, which also will increase their motivation. Adding a HR goal to the yearly goal setting also means that the HR managers have to give tasks out of hands. Otherwise the FLMs are accountable, but do not have control.

13. Think about devolving more business tasks to team members by FLMs.

When the HR managers devolved HR tasks to the FLMs, the FLMs did not devolve business tasks to their team members. They kept doing the same tasks, which meant that they have to do more in the same amount of time. When the FLMs devolve the detailed micro-management of processes, they have more time left to spend on the HR tasks. Although, the question is if this is what SCHOTT US wants. FLMs are hired because of their technical knowledge, they have a passion for their business tasks and therefore they are probably not willing to devolve more business tasks. In my opinion the FLMs do not have to devolve more business tasks, when they are performing their business and HR tasks effectively. FLMs are not educated and hired to perform HR tasks, that is still the main responsibility of HR managers.

14. Think about another classification of the HR department.

At this moment the tasks of the HR department is classified per theme. When FLMs need support, it depends on the question which HR manager they have to go to. This might be a barrier for the FLMs to be proactive to ask for support. The HR department could be classified per business segment. Every HR manager is responsible for a business segment, and all FLMs of that segment can go to one HR manager for support. In this case, the HR manager gets to know the FLMs better, they might understand the problems FLMs have to deal with better, and FLMs probably will get more trust in the HR department. So, another classification might lead to better support of the HR managers to the FLMs and to a better communication between the two groups. A disadvantage of this classification is that every HR manager needs the knowledge about all the themes. To avoid this, the HR department can also divide the business segment among the HR managers. In this case, every business segment has its own HR manager, this manager is just their communication person. So they have one HR manager to go to with questions. The HR manager can ask help from other HR managers, but (s)he will communicate the answer back. When this division is made, the HR managers have still their own tasks, but the communication between both groups and therefore also the support might improve.

15. Organize HR related training courses.

The HR department has to organize specific HR training courses in order to apply the HR practices more effectively. Firstly, the HR department can organize an internal training course for FLMs. This training course explains what the HR policy and procedures at SCHOTT US are, what is expected from

the FLMs according to HR, and which HR guidelines and tools are available to reach these expectations. This training course will make the policies and procedures clearer. Secondly the FLMs need to develop their HR skills and competencies. At this moment SCHOTT US organizes skill training courses, but they are all focused on business issues. Furthermore, the FLMs do not know how to motivate their people, they have to learn how to do this differently than by rewarding them by pay. They have to know how to develop their people within the system of SCHOTT US. This can be done by developing their HR skills and competencies with a training course which is just focused on HR issues.

These training courses can be mandatory or voluntary. When the HR department chooses to make these courses mandatory, they are sure that all FLMs will follow these training courses and will therefore develop themselves. The disadvantage is that the FLMs might be less motivated to go, therefore they will not learn as much as they would do when they are motivated. The disadvantage of making the training courses voluntary is that a-motivated FLMs will not follow the course and most of the time those FLMs need the training course the most.

16. <u>Be more proactive in giving support to the FLMs.</u>

The FLMs need to know what is available for them in order to reach the HR goals which the HR department sets for them. The HR managers need to be proactive and hands-on and explain the HR tools and guidelines which are available to the FLMs as soon as the FLM get his/ her new position, in order to prevent superfluous questions.

17. <u>Involve FLMs in HR policy making.</u>

HR policies most of the time influences the FLMs. Therefore, FLMs should be involved in HR policy making. The results demonstrated that the FLMs have more knowledge about how everything is going on the work floor than the HR department has. They also have a clear opinion about what they want to change. When the FLMs are involved in HR policy making, the practical knowledge of the FLMs can be combined with the theoretical knowledge of the HR department. This might lead to HR policy and procedures with which the FLMs agree and therefore will perform.

The HR department can involve the FLMs by including them in management meetings. These meetings include discussions about HR policies and an opportunity for feedback from the FLMs to the HR managers. These meetings should be voluntarily. In this way, the HR department gives the FLMs the chance to participate and the HR department will be prevented from discussion in retrospect.

18. <u>Think about devolving more HR tasks to the FLMs.</u>

Within the next couple of years, the HR department will devolve all operative tasks to the FLMs. At this moment the FLMs perceive certain problems with implementing HR practices and some barriers might become bigger when more tasks are devolved to the FLMs. FLMs prefer doing their business tasks, when they have to perform more HR tasks, they will have less time to do what they really like and in the extreme SCHOTT US might lose employees.

In my opinion it is not ideal to devolve more tasks to the FLMs. When the barriers which already exists are solved, the FLMs perform their HR responsibilities optimally and the HR managers might be less busy with supporting the FLMs. They might have some spare time to spend on the strategic side of HR and it might not be necessary to devolve more tasks to the FLMs.

6.3 Further research

Because this research had to be finished within ten weeks, I was not able to research everything that is interesting and further research is recommended. When further research will be done, I have some recommendations to improve the research.

1. <u>Research a sample of FLMs which are working in a factory.</u>

Because I could stay for only seven weeks in Elmsford, I was not able to examine the FLMs in the factories of SCHOTT US, which are located over four hours from the corporate office. In further research, it would be interesting to research the opinion of these FLMs, because most of the time, these FLMs are less well educated and have fewer experiences than the FLMs at the office. Furthermore they might have even more and other problems with implementing HR practices than the FLMs which I examined.

2.   <u>Research a larger sample of FLMs.</u>
Within the seven weeks I stayed at Elmsford, I was able to interview 10 FLMs and 13 FLMs filled out the questionnaire. This sample is relatively small, which affects the external validity of this research. When a larger sample can be researched, the results will be more valid.

3.   <u>Research an organization with its headquarter in America.</u>
The head quarter of SCHOTT is located in Germany and every location of SCHOTT has to deal with European policies. So, SCHOTT US was a relatively European oriented organization. When this research is done in an organization which is headquartered in The United States of America, it might give different results.

4.   <u>Research the differences between European organizations and American organizations.</u>
Nehles et al (2006) already researched the barriers which FLMs may perceive with implementing HR practices in organizations located in Germany and The Netherlands. These results might differ from the results of this research, for example because of differences in culture. Because I had too little time to compare the results of the two studies, it might be interesting to examine the differences and to research the causes of these differences.

5.   <u>Look critically at previous research about this topic.</u>
It might be interesting to look at previous research about this topic with this research in consideration. Some previous researches about this topic are only based on the view of HR managers. This research proved that there is a gap between the views of HR managers and FLMs on the barriers when implementing HR practices. So, previous researches might draw other conclusions when the view of the FLMs was taken in consideration.

Chapter 7: Reflection

In this last chapter I will reflect on my work. I will do this in order to develop myself by critically examining my own actions.

With my bachelor assignment I wanted to contribute to the performance of an organization. I wanted to examine something which is important for an organization and which people are interested in. SCHOTT US just realizes that there are barriers with implementing HR practices by FLMs, through which this research connects with the future goals of the HR department: solving those barriers. That is why I chose this assignment.

The university has set some goals for the students who have to finish their bachelor assignment. These goals include:
- use your knowledge and insights (including methodological skills) to address practical issues in the academic field;
- give a well-balanced assessment of your own work, from an academic stance, from the practical side, and from the ethical perspective;
- communicate (both orally and in writing) your ideas and insights to a mixed public;
- work independently.

The goals I wanted to achieve by doing this bachelor assignment are, to:
- Develop my research skills, especially to improve my skills to write a literature review and methodology.
- Develop my English, especially my English writing skills.
- Enlarge my HR knowledge.
- Convince myself that I am able to pass through every stage of a research process on my own and to achieve a good end result.
- Examine the way I would react when I live for a longer time in a foreign country, with a different culture and language, without my friends and family around.
- Examine how I would think about working 40 hours a week.

To end this research properly I needed knowledge about business administration, with a specialization in HRM. During my bachelor of Business Administration I learned how to set up a research, how to put the theory into practice and how to compare the theory with the practice. This knowledge is gained by several methodological subjects and projects we had to finish before we could start the bachelor assignment. These projects and subjects were always in cooperation with other students. The bachelor assignment is the first time I had to go through the whole research process individually. Furthermore, I have had only one HR related subject. The knowledge I acquired during this subject was too little to accomplish this assignment. In order to enlarge my HR knowledge, I read a lot of articles and I delved into the HR literature.

So, I developed my HR knowledge and I learned to do a research process individually.

Before I went to America, I made a time schedule. My plan was to finish my research proposal before I went to America. In America I should gather all my data and process all these data, so that I only had to write the conclusions and recommendations after my stay in America.

In practice, my time schedule turned out differently. I had ten days to finish my research proposal, before I went to the United States. Within these ten days I set up my literature review and my methodology. In advance, I was not looking forward to write the literature review. I thought this was the hardest part of the process, so I was really surprised I could finish it within these ten days. That I finished my research proposal parting the main, was to my advantage when I arrived in America. I could start my research directly the first day I started at SCHOTT US. Within one week I arranged all

the interviews and I prepared my interview questions for the HR managers. After two weeks at SCHOTT US I interviewed all HR managers and I prepared the interview questions for the FLMs and the questionnaire they had to fill out. This all went faster than I thought in advance. During the last four weeks I worked out the results of the HR managers, I sent this to my teachers in the Netherlands, I interviewed the FLMs and simultaneously with the interviews the questionnaires were send out. Just as the methodology described, I went after the FLMs three times in order to get all the FLMs to fill out the questionnaire. But it seemed that they filled out the questionnaire after they were interviewed, so the last day I was at the office, the last FLMs handed in the questionnaire, through which I was unable to elaborate the results of the FLMs in America, although this was my plan in first instance.

When I was back in The Netherlands, I took a break of two months before I started to work further on the research. Within four weeks I had to rewrite my research proposal, and I had to write my conclusions, recommendations, self-reflection, and summary. This took more time than I thought in advance. At the end of the process it was hard for me to dedicate to finish the research.

In brief, the time schedule I made in April was not realistic. I did not consider how dependent I was on the time schedules of the FLMs. Furthermore, sometimes I had to wait for a reaction of the teachers in The Netherlands before I could go on with my research. The communication is a little harder and takes a little longer when you are abroad than when you stay in The Netherlands. This resulted in more time to spend on helping the HR department, which I really liked.

My stay in Elmsford was great. The work atmosphere at SCHOTT US was very pleasant, everybody was very helpful when I needed something or when I had questions. I learned not to be afraid of asking something to someone I do not know yet. I had two really nice colleagues from Germany who helped me a lot and who showed me the American way of life. Furthermore the HR department of SCHOTT US supported me with everything: my research, my HR related questions. They also gave me the opportunity to help with certain tasks on the HR department, through which I experienced how it is to work in the HR department and to get insight in to all the tasks HR managers are dealing with. Together with a HR manager I developed an evaluation form for interns in order to improve the internships at SCHOTT US. Therefore I was very critical about the way interns are working at SCHOTT US and I made a proposal how to improve this. Furthermore, because of this internship I realized I have chosen the right Master direction and that I want to work at the HR department of a big (multinational) organization.

It was disappointing how long it took me to acclimatize in The Netherlands after I left America. The plan was to work on my research directly after I arrived in The Netherlands, but I could not concentrate on my work. When I was back, I realized how much I learned in America, not only qua study, but also about myself and all the things I did at that moment and the things I planned to do next year(s). In the end it took me a month before I could start working on my studies again.

At the office everybody is working in cubicles. This means that everybody has his/ her own place which is defined by walls of six feet high. Before, I thought these cubicles would decrease the atmosphere at the office, and that it was harder to meet the people working there, but because of these cubicles I was very focused on my work and there was little distraction. During work time it was quiet at the office, and during the break was the ability to meet the employees of SCHOTT US.

The HR managers helped me with developing my English writing and speaking skills by supporting me with creating the interview and reading the parts I wrote. And of course just living in an English speaking country improved my English skills.

Working at an office was new for me. It taught me how to work on a formal basis with people and to be more calm. It showed me how I act in such an environment and how the people react to me. This turns out to be positive. The feedback I got was that I was 'the sunshine of the work floor' and that I had 'positive energy'. Furthermore American people differ in certain ways from European people. They are less direct with their opinions and more polite. So, I learned to give my opinion and criticism

more carefully. American people are less open minded than Dutch people are, so I really had to think about everything I wanted to say, in the beginning this was hard for me and some American colleagues gave me the feedback to keep certain things to myself in the future. But at the end of my stay in Elmsford a group of German men was at the office and I realized I was shocked by how open and rude European people can be.

I think I achieved the goals which are set by the University. The University developed the bachelor assignment in such a way that these goals are met either way. I think that the bachelor assignment is a good practice in order to achieve the master thesis, because now I went through every stage of the research process myself. In my opinion the hardest part of the research process is to write down my thoughts in a scientific way. Furthermore the methodology part was difficult for me. Most of the time I know exactly what I want to say or what the conclusion is, but it is hard to write this down in a good way.

I also achieved the goals which I set for myself. During almost the whole process of the research I stayed motivated to improve my work and to develop my research skills. I am surprised to see what I can achieve, despite the circumstances, and that I really enjoyed doing the research. Of course my trip to the United States contributed to this experience and my stay at SCHOTT US certainly enriched my personality. It gave me the opportunity to evaluate my life in Enschede, and to look to my ambitions for the future. I now realize that I made the right choice by doing the HR master track, that I do not want to work on a office for 40 hours a week, but that I need some connection with the 'real world', that I can handle a life in a foreign country, with new people around me and without my family and friends.

In summary, because of this assignment I developed my business administrative skills and I enriched my personality.

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- annual report 2007: SCHOTT group 2006/ 2007
- Employee handbook SCHOTT US

Appendix A: Company description

SCHOTT is a multinational, technology-based group developing and manufacturing specialty materials, supplying special glass and components as well as systems for now nearly 125 years to improve how people live and work.

SCHOTT has production plants and sales offices close to its customers in all major markets and is thereby located in 41 countries (see Appendix B: SCHOTT locations worldwide).

The core values of SCHOTT are accountability, market-driven innovation, technological expertise as well as integrity, reliability and entrepreneurship. Moreover the mission of SCHOTT is to profitably enable their customers' success by constantly challenging limits through innovations and entrepreneurship.

The parent company of the SCHOTT Group is SCHOTT AG, whose sole shareholder is Carl-Zeiss-Stiftung.

For the first decade of the 21st century SCHOTT developed the "Vision 2010" which provides a clear orientation to all employees around the world as they fulfill their professional responsibilities.

A great number of employees from the multinational SCHOTT-world participated in the creation of the idea.

Segments and Businesses
The SCHOTT AG Management Board consists of Prof. Dr.-Ing. Udo Ungeheuer (Chairman), Dr. Jürgen Dahmer and Klaus Rübenthaler. The structure of SCHOTT is showed in Appendix C.

SCHOTT has three different segments; every segment has several businesses.

1. Precision Materials:
- Electronic packaging: SCHOTT is a global developer, manufacturer and distributor of materials and components for maximum protection of sensitive electronics.
- Display Glass: SCHOTT supplies LCD glass substrates in large dimensions used for production of flat panel displays (FDP) for television sets, monitors and notebooks.
- Pharmaceutical systems: SCHOTT is one of the world's leading manufacturers of special glass tubes and pharmaceutical primary packaging made of glass and polymers.

2. Optical industries:
- Advanced materials: SCHOTT offers special glasses of high quality for applications in architecture, lighting, digital projection, electronics and eyeglasses. SCHOTT supplies a wide range of optical materials and components for lithography and diverse optical applications and is one of the leading suppliers worldwide of optical glass and glass-ceramics. The product range extends from raw glass to optical components.
- Fiber optics: Fiber optics offers customized LED and fiber optic solutions in markets such as automotive, lighting as well as medical, industrial and defense.

3. Home Appliances:
- Home tech: With Ceran cooking surfaces for the household appliance industry, SCHOTT is a leading global supplier in this market.
- Flat glass: With its processed flat glass and glass components, SCHOTT offers the household appliance industry worldwide innovative solutions for ovens and refrigerators. Glass door and frame systems ensure optimum food presentation in commercial cooling systems.
- Solar: Solar offers sustainable and future-oriented solutions for the efficient use of solar energy.

Financial Key Figures 2007
After one of the most successful years in SCHOTT's history the financial figures for 2007 were moderate lower. This can be seen by the following comparison:

	2006	2007
Global Sales	2.23 billion euros	2.14 billion euros
EBIT[1]	193 million euros	267 million euros
Capital expenditure[2]	313 million euros	296 million euros
Expenditures on R&D[3]	5 % on sales	3 % on sale
New product rate	32 % on sales	30 % on sale

Employees
Over 17000 employees are working with SCHOTT, 6000 of them are working in Germany, where the headquarter is established. In the United States 2000 people are engaged and helping the company to prosper.
The ability and commitment of SCHOTT's employees form the basis for the success of the SCHOTT Group. With flat hierarchies and a lively corporate culture, SCHOTT encourages taking responsibility and offers diverse career opportunities.
The SCHOTT Performance Share Program enables all employees to become financially involved in the success of the SCHOTT Group. Presently about 3500 employees are participating in the Performance Share Program. This program is available for employees in 25 countries.
Research and development are really important for SCHOTT. More than 600 employees worldwide work on developing new products and materials, technologies as well as facilities and systems required to manufacture them.
This all happens for example in the Otto Schott Research Center in Mainz, which is one of the world's most up-to-date glass research units in the world.
SCHOTT R&D employees' foster close relations with many partners from universities, research institutes and industrial undertakings in Germany and other countries in order to secure the maintain of a reliable base.

Milestones
In 1884 Otto Schott, Ernst Abbe and Carl and Roderich Zeiss founded the Glasstechnische Laboratorium SCHOTT & Genossen in Jena, Germany. Later on in 1889 Ernst Abbe established the Carl-Zeiss-Foundation, which became in 1919 sole owner of the enterprise.

The original factory in Jena has been expropriated in 1948 and was converted into a state-owned company of the former GDR. Because of the division of Germany the headquarters of SCHOTT Group was rebuilt in Mainz in the Federal Republic in 1952. A few years later in 1954, the very first manufacturing subsidiary has been built from scratch in Brazil.

In the 1960s the SCHOTT Group started to spread subsidiaries in the Western and Southern parts of Europe and also in the USA.
In 1974 the CERAN© glass-ceramic cooking surface was introduced and made their way into kitchens worldwide. After the German reunification in 1991 SCHOTT in Mainz took over the ownership of the previously state-owned Jenaer Glaswerke.
In the years 2001 and 2005 SCHOTT entered the photovoltaic and solar receiver market in order to keep pace in a competitive branch as well as penetrating in nearly untapped markets with cutting-edge solar products.
In the year 2004 then the enterprise was converted to a stock corporation. Shares are not dealt at the Stock Exchange as the Carl-Zeiss-Stiftung is its sole shareholder.
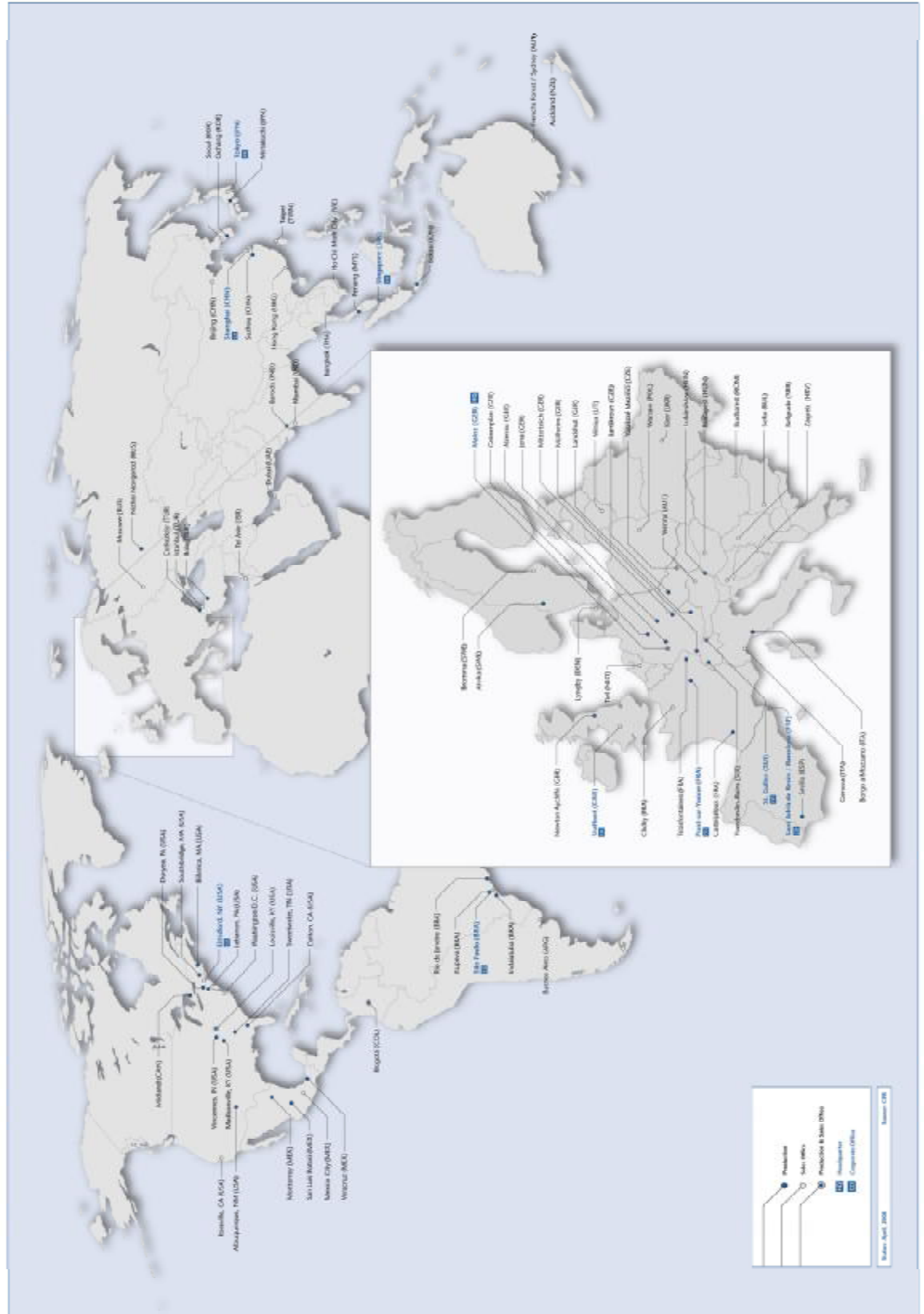
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[1] Earning before interest and taxes
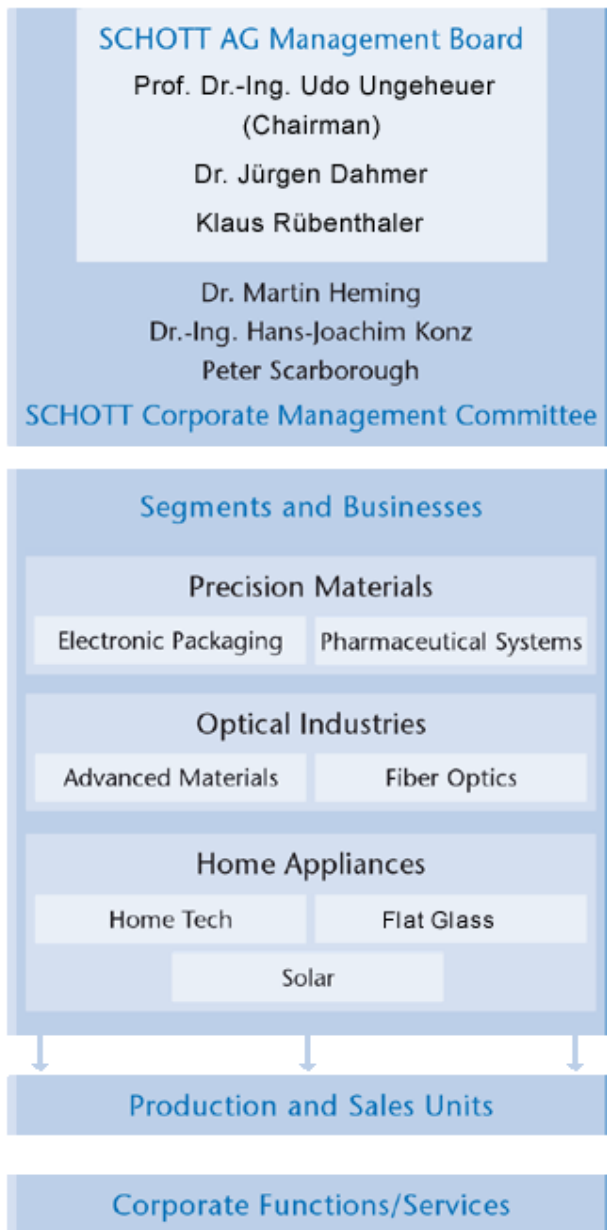[2] Expenditures in property, plant and equipment
[3] Research and Development

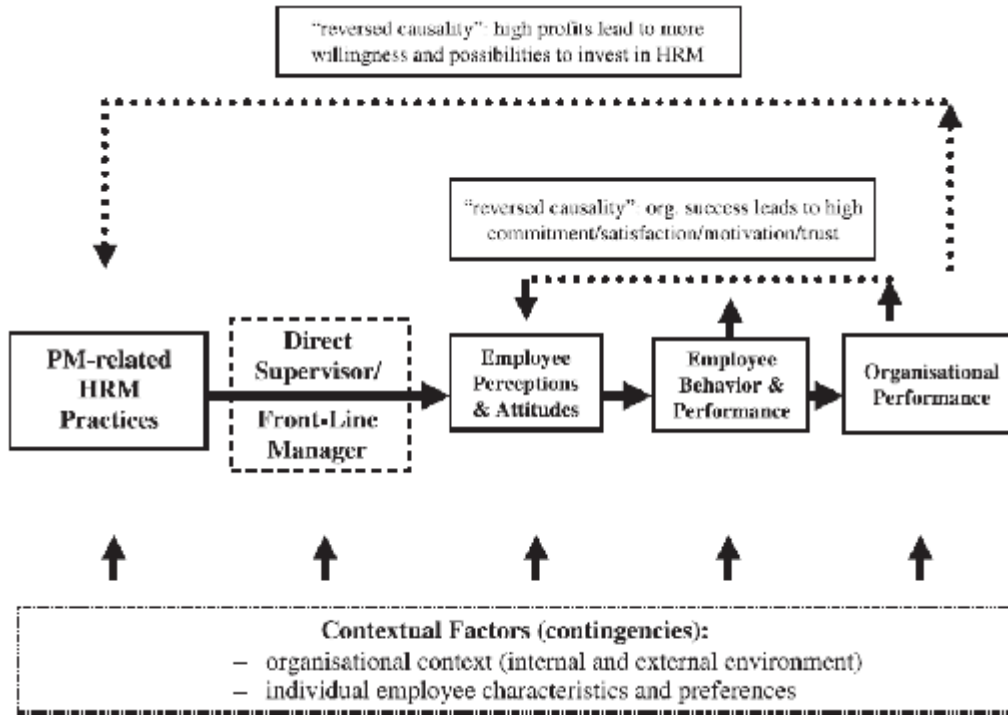## Appendix B: SCHOTT locations worldwide

Appendix C: Structure of SCHOTT

SCHOTT AG Management Board

Prof. Dr.-Ing. Udo Ungeheuer
(Chairman)

Dr. Jürgen Dahmer

Klaus Rübenthaler

Dr. Martin Heming
Dr.-Ing. Hans-Joachim Konz
Peter Scarborough

SCHOTT Corporate Management Committee

Segments and Businesses

Precision Materials

Electronic Packaging | Pharmaceutical Systems

Optical Industries

Advanced Materials | Fiber Optics

Home Appliances

Home Tech | Flat Glass

Solar

Production and Sales Units

Corporate Functions/Services

Appendix D: Model of the HRM and performance relationship from a PM perspective

(Den Hartog, Boselie & Paauwe, 2004)

Appendix E: Problem provision

To make clear what will be examined, a step-by-step plan will be used which results in a research question by asking the questions what, why, when, which and how (Geurts, 1999-19).

What?
What are the barriers perceived by FLMs of SCHOTT US with implementing HR practices?
By theoretical research to the different barriers which FLMs can perceive with implementing HR practices, I will attempt to find out the different barriers which FLMs at SCHOTT US experience.

Why?
Why do FLMs at SCHOTT US perceive barriers with implementing HR practices?
This question needs a research to the source of the barriers, this will be done in the theoretical research.

When?
When do FLMs perceive barriers with implementing HR practices and when arise the barriers FLMs perceive with implementing HR practices?
This research will examine which hindrances are being perceived by FLMs with implementing HR practices, how these hindrances can be solved, and how they arise. The assumption in this research is that the hindrances aroused when HR managers devolved responsibilities and tasks to the FLMs and that since FLMs perceive these hindrances. Because of the foregoing this question will be left out during this research.

Which?
Which barrier is the biggest obstruction for implementing HR practices by FLMs at SCHOTT US from the vision of HR managers and which from the vision of FLMs?
When the barriers are known, than there has to be a research to the view of HR managers and the view of FLMs on this topic. This can be done by interviews and questionnaires (see Data-collection Methods).

How?
How can the differences between the visions of HR managers and FLMs be explained?
When the vision on the barriers are known, the barriers can be explained and recommendations can be given to SCHOTT how to solve these barriers.

Appendix F: Human Resource manager interview framework

This interview will take about one hour. The purpose of this interview is to get information about which barriers with implementing HR practices by FLMs you perceive and which you think FLMs perceive. I also want to use this interview to prepare the questionnaires I will send out to the FLMs. I want to make clear that all information you will give me will be processed anonymously.

First of all I want to ask a couple of questions about your position with SCHOTT.
1. What is your business function at SCHOTT (for which HR activities are you responsible: recruitment and selection/ training and development/ career opportunities/ performance appraisal/ rewards)?
2. How long have you been working at SCHOTT in this position?
3. What did you work for prior to SCHOTT and what positions did you hold?
4. What is your educational background (technical, managerial, HBO, university)?
5. For how many people you are directly and indirectly responsible? (Daily, direct responsibility; and Functional: for how many people do you have the end responsibility, so the executive function has been devolved)?
6. What is the average level of education of the people in your team?

I already noticed that some HR responsibilities are delegated to the FLMs.
1. Can you tell me which responsibilities you have delegated?
2. Which tasks do FLMs have in general, except for the HR responsibilities?

By my literature review I found out that there are several factors which can cause barriers with implementing HR practices. The factors I found are: desire, capacity, competencies, support, and policy and procedures. Perhaps there are more. In this part of the interview I will look at which barriers may exist at SCHOTT.

The first factor: *Desire*
1. What do you think is the reason for FLMs to perform their HR responsibilities (interested in it/ for own good/ supposed to/ have to)?
2. How do you think FLMs contribute to the organization by performing HR responsibilities (it provides a good work atmosphere/ helps supervise their teams/ helps the people in their team to grow/ it helps with getting the right people on the right place/ people getting more motivated etc)?
3. What do you think FLMs prefer: business issues or people issues? Which they do perform better on?

The second factor: *Capacity*
1. How much time per week does a FLMs have to spend on performing their HR responsibilities?
2. How much time do you think FLMs actual spend on performing their HR responsibilities?
3. Do you think FLMS spend enough time on their HR responsibilities?
4. Do FLMs have enough time to spend on HR responsibilities?
5. Which HR responsibility do you think they should spend more time on?
6. Do FLMs have the feeling management asks to much of them? (role overload)
7. Are there FLMs who cannot handle their business and people responsibilities? In what way do you notice that?

The third factor: C*ompetencies*
1. Which competencies FLMs need to perform HR responsibilities well?

2. Do FLMs have these competencies?
3. Which competence do FLMs lack?
4. Are they willing to learn new things in performing HR responsibilities?
5. Do you think the effort of FLMs is good enough in general?
6. Does SCHOTT have HR training courses for FLMs, (yes à what kind; no à why not)?
7. Are following these training courses sufficient and relevant for performing HR responsibilities well?
8. Do FLMs have enough experience that is sufficient and relevant for performing HR responsibilities?

The fourth factor: *Support*
1. Do FLMs need support?
2. What kind of support does SCHOTT give to FLMs (do FLMs also get individual support)?
3. Which HR responsibilities do FLMs need the most support with?
4. What kind of support do you give to FLMs?
5. Do you give the support to FLMs timely?
6. Do FLMs get enough support to resolve their issues?
7. Do you understand the issues FLMs perceive in performing HR responsibilities?
8. Do you like to help FLMs, or do you prefer to do other tasks?

The fifth factor: *Policy and Procedures*
1. How do FLMs know they have to perform HR responsibilities? Are the FLMs explicitly informed?
2. What HR policies and guidelines does SCHOTT have to assist FLMs in performing their HR responsibilities? Are they clear?
3. Is there a consistency with all managers in performing their HR responsibilities?
4. Which resources and materials are available for FLMs to execute HR responsibilities? Are these resources and materials adequate?

Finally I will ask you some general questions.
1. Which factor of the five factors we have discussed do you perceive as the biggest barrier for FLMs to perform their HR responsibilities? Why?
2. Do you think there are other barriers which FLMs can perceive in performing their HR responsibilities?
3. Does SCHOTT have a program or a plan for solving these barriers?
4. Do you think the CAO (collective labour agreement: it is a sample of agreements between (representatives of) employers and employees. The CAO is a supplement of the individual labour agreement which employer and employee concludes. Almost everything is in the CAO: minimum of salary, vacation hours, working hours etc.) does make your job easier, or not?
5. Can I pose questions afterwards, if necessary?

Appendix G: Line manager interview framework

Agenda
1. Introduction of research
2. Introduction of interviewee
3. Current situation regarding HR issues
4. Reasons for using HR practices
5. Reasons for <u>not</u> using HR practices

1. Introduction of research
Well as you already know, I'm Willemijn. I'm going to finish my bachelor degree by this thesis. In short my research is about the barriers FLMs may perceive with implementing HR practices. This research has already been done in The Netherlands and in Germany and this research will be a part of that research. By interviewing as well HR managers as FLMs I will examine both perspectives on these barriers. So the goal of this interview is to get your point of view on the barriers you perceive with implementing HR practices.

Confidentiality and anonymity are treated very importantly. The data will be processed by the University of Twente with complete confidentiality. This interview will be treated with the highest confidentiality and anonymity. This report in progress will be completely anonymous and there will be no report on any identifying individuals.

This interview will take about one and a half hour.

First of all I want to explain what I mean by HR tasks/ issues: all activities you do concerning to HRM. From selecting your employees to motivate them. The communication you have with your employees, discussions about salaries, performance etc.

2. Introduction of interviewee
First of all I want to get some demographic information:
1. What is your role with SCHOTT?
2. How long have you been working at SCHOTT in this position?
3. What did you work for prior to SCHOTT and what positions did you hold?
4. What is your educational background?
5. How many direct and indirect reports are you responsible for?
6. What is the average level of education of the people on your team?

3. Current situation regarding HR issues
The following questions are about the current situation regarding HR issues.
1. How much time per week (on average) do you spend on HR issues?
2. Which HR practices does that include?
3. How much time are you willing to spend on using HR practices?
4. How much time do you think you should spend on using HR practices in order to use them effectively?
5. When utilising HR practices do you implement on your own or together with the HR department? Would you prefer together with the HR department?
6. Do you know what is expected from you in using HR practices?
7. Is there anybody else outside the HR department helping you with implementing HR practices?

4. Reasons for using HR practices
Now I will ask some things about your reasons for using HR practices and for NOT using your HR practices.
1. Why do you use HR practices?
2. Do you like using HR practices? Why?
3. Are there incentives for you to use HR practices (financial and non-financial)?

4. What is your yearly evaluation based on (is using HR practices)?
5. Are your HR responsibilities included in your job description?
6. Do HR practices help you to reach your business goals? How?

5. Reasons for <u>not</u> using HR practices
1. Is there anything hindering you in using HR practices?
2. What is your opinion about the HR practices you are provided with?
3. Where do the HR practices you use come from (central HR department)?
4. Are the practices concrete enough for you to use them? Why not?
5. Are you provided with guidelines for using the HR practices? Do you find guidelines for using HR practices helpful?
6. Are the HR practices you use more in line with the business strategy or with the strategy of your department?
7. Do you prioritize business issues or HR issues? Why?
8. Which HR responsibilities do you prefer over others?
9. Are you involved in HR policy making? How?
   - Do you think you should?

Ability
1. Do you feel you have enough HR knowledge/ HR skills for using HR practices?
2. Did you receive any training for using HR practices?
   - If yes, was it valuable and was it sufficient?
   - If no, do you need any? What kind of?
3. Do you need support for using HR practices?
4. What kind of support?
5. Do you get the support for using HR practices you need? Why not? From whom?
6. Do you ask (the HR department) for support/ advice?

General
Finally I would like to ask you some questions in general.
1. Is there anything that you feel is hindering you from implementing HR practices that we have not discussed yet?
2. In general, what would make your job easier?
   - Do you think the CAO does make your job easier, or not?
   - Do the different levels of education on your team make your job easier, or not?
3. From all things discussed in this interview, what needs to change most regarding the use of HR practices? Why?
4. Which of the five barriers do you think is the biggest barrier perceived by FLMs with implementing HR responsibilities?

THANK YOU
P.S.:
5. I have a questionnaire that has been used by FLMs in The Netherlands and Germany. I would like to ask you if you could complete it too. It will only take about 20 minutes.
6. Can I pose questions afterwards, if necessary?

Appendix H: Assessing the constraints of HR implementation: Development and validation of the research instrument interview

(Nehles, Riemsdijk & Looise, 2006)

Goal: Development of a theoretically grounded and empirically validated research instrument to measure the HR implementation constraints of line managers.
Research question: In what way can we measure line managers' constraints in implementing HR

Concept	Operationalization	Measures and constructs
Desire	Personal motivation of line managers: - Self determined to perform HR tasks	Motivation average: (4) - Intrinsic motivation (1) - Identified regulation (1) - External regulation (1) - Amotivation (1)
Capacity	Sufficient capacity for performing HR and operational responsibilities	Capacity: Time spending (4) - Role overload (3)
Competencies	HR-related competencies: - Self-perceived knowledge of HR tasks - Importance and sufficiency of HR related training courses and experience	Self-efficacy - Training (1) - Experience (1)
Support	Perceived effectiveness of the support line managers receive from HR professionals: - HR support services - HR support effectiveness & efficiency	- Need for support (1) - Kind of support (1) - Source of support (1) - effectiveness & efficiency (1)
Policy & procedures	Certainty about how to use HR practices: - Perceived clearness of HR responsibilities and authorities - Usefulness and clarity of HR forms, Instruments and guidelines	- Role conflict (2) - Role ambiguity (2) User friendliness of HR forms (2)

Interview is done at SCHOTT US location Elmsford, employing 65 people; n = 19
Response rate: 73.7%

Appendix I: Assessing the constraints of HR implementation: Development and validation of the research instrument questionnaire

(Nehles, van Riemsdijk & Looise, 2006)

Goal: Development of a theoretically grounded and empirically validated research instrument to measure the HR implementation constraints of line managers.
Research question: In what way can we measure line managers' constraints in implementing HR tasks effectively?

Concept	Operationalization	Measures and constructs
Desire	Personal motivation of line managers: - Self determined to perform HR tasks - Perceived added value for performing HR tasks	Situational Motivation Scale (SIMS; Guay, Vallerand & Blanchard, 2000): - Intrinsic motivation (4) - Identified regulation (4) - External regulation (4) - Amotivation (4) Value added*(7)
Capacity	Sufficient capacity for performing HR and operational responsibilities	Role overload of the wife scale (Reilly, 1982): - Role overload (R) (7)
Competencies	HR-related competencies: - Self-perceived knowledge of HR tasks - Importance and sufficiency of HR related training courses and experience	Occupational self-efficacy (Schyns & van Collani, 2002) - Self-efficacy (6) Training* (2) Experience* (2)
Support	Perceived effectiveness of the support line managers receive from HR professionals: - HR support services - HR support effectiveness & efficiency	SERQUAL scale on service quality (Parasuraman et al., 1988): - Reliability & responsiveness (9) - Assurance & empathy (9)
Policy & procedures	Certainty about how to use HR practices: - Perceived clearness of HR responsibilities and authorities - Usefulness and clarity of HR forms, Instruments and guidelines	Role ambiguity and role conflict scale of Rizzo et al. (1970) - Role conflict (R) (9) - Role ambiguity (R) (9) User friendliness of HR forms* (5)

*Developed on the basis of a pilot case study
(R) Reverse coding
Questionnaire is done at SCHOTT US location Elmsford, employing 65 people; n= 13 response rate: 100%

Appendix J: Tasks of HR department and FLMs

Manager	HR tasks
HR manager	HR policy making Recruitment Employee selection and placement Organization of training courses Communication to payroll Government reporting Performance management Succession planning Take care of medical and dental insurance Benefit management Relocations General HR tasks, which include: - Administration of health benefit of retirees, employees and terminated - Management of interns, trainees and apprentices - Track employees who are on vacation/ off work - Communicate changes in HR strategy to work field - Communicate vision to work field - Support employees
FLM	Inform HR about transactions/ promotions/ salary increases/ etc. Interpret and apply company policies (i.e. dress code) Participation in participant selection (i.e. review resumes, participate in job interviews) Make job descriptions for members of their team Direct management of employee, which includes: - Scheduling employees - Performance review discussion - Determine and communicate of salary increases - Set-up of an employee development plan - Management of workflow - Goal Setting - Communicate performance issues with HR and address them with employee - Recognize training needs of employees - Motivation of the employees - Organizing team building activities - Arrangement of vacation time and time schedules - Check on absence times - Management of priorities of employees

Appendix K: HR tools at SCHOTT US

HR tool
Direction of HR tool
Employee handbook (see Appendix M)
Compensation brochures
Feedback form
Performance plan templates
Reference guide
Qualified benefits plans - Pension plan and Enhanced plan - Plan administration and compliance - Flexible spending accounts billing and administration
Non - qualified benefits plans - SERP administration and participant communications - Health care consultation - Coordination of SCHOTT performance Share/ Profit Sharing Program - Administration and communication of benefits
Welfare benefits plans
Compensation guidelines - Pay administration - Review of salaries, bonuses and bonus targets of direct reports to division heads - Communication of policies, including annual salary budget guidelines - Development of retention tools, long term incentives and other variable compensation programs, i.e. team-based incentives - Job evaluations and job grade determinations
Employee development and training - Succession planning and management development - Leadership training - Nationwide training program - Self managed development - Performance improvement plan consultation
Employee relations - Interpretation and communication of HR policies - Expatriate personnel policy administration - Governmental reporting and compliance - Special severance and termination agreements - Preventive labor relations consulation - Management of inter-division transfers and relocations - Administration of Employee Reference Guide - Employment of labor law consulation
Recruitment and staffing - Campus recruiting for international associates program and interns - Participation in hiring decisions for all positions reporting to division heads - Coordination of newspaper advertising and internet recruitment - Maintenance of relationships to staffing agencies and headhunters - International and local intern
Others - HRIS support - Management of US international Associates and Carl-Duisberg-Society global internship program - Coordination of HR related topics in divestiture and downsizing projects - Coordination of mass layoffs and plant closure follow-up activities - Collectve bargaining negotiations
Costs of support
Improvement initiatives

Appendix L: Training courses at SCHOTT US

SCHOTT INTERNAL TRAINING FOR NORTH AMERICA

- Self-Managed Development
- Leadership Development Training
- Leadership Supervisory Training
- Leadership Skills Training
- Market-Driven Strategic Management
- Managing Negotiations
- Skillful Selling
- Project Management
- Product Innovation
- Trade Show Training
- Communication Across Cultures
- Effective Presentations
- Effective Meetings
- Team Member Training
- Various Personal Computer Programs
- SAP R/3 Basics
- Six Sigma

Please contact your local Human Resources representative for more information.

SCHOTT
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10/03

Appendix M: Employees handbook

Section 1

1. SCHOTT History
2. Vision 2010 Core Values
3. Employment
   o Equal Employment Opportunity
   o The Americans with Disabilities Act
   o Harassment
   o Reporting Cases of Discrimination or Harassment
   o Immigration Law Compliance
   o Pre-employment Drug Test
   o Employee Background Check
   o Employement-at-Will
   o Job Posting
   o Relocation Policy
   o Personal Data Changes
   o Employee Development
      § Goal Setting/ Performance Management
      § Self-Managed Development
      § Leadership and Empowerment
      § Training
      § Educational Assistance
      § More Information
   o Employement Termination
4. Business Ethics
   o Conflicts of Interest
   o Gifts (receiving and giving)
   o Confidential Business Information
5. Compensation
   o Exempt Employees
   o Non –Exempt employees
   o Direct Deposit
   o Patent Incentive Program
6. Time off with pay
   o Vacation Practices
   o Holidays and Personal Days
   o Short – Term Disability Policy
   o Maternity Leave Policy
7. Leave of absence without paying
   o Family and Medical Leave Act
   o Military Service
8. Quality of life
   o Personal Conduct
   o Personal Property
   o Computer, e-mail and Internet Usage

- o   Telephone and Cell Phone Usage
- o   Drug-Free and Alcohol-Free Workplace
- o   Searches
- o   Safety
- o   Violence in the Workplace
- o   Solicitation
9.   Travel Policy

Section 2

US – Harmonized Benefits:
1.   Summary of Benefits Plans SCHOTT North America, Inc

Section 3

Local Practices
1.   Employment Categories
2.   Attendance
   a.   Hours of Work
   b.   Timekeeping
   c.   Perfect Attendance
3.   Time Off with Pay
   a.   Holidays
   b.   Bereavement
   c.   Jury Duty
4.   Miscellaneous
   a.   Personal Appearance
   b.   Smoking
   c.   Severe Weather Condition
   d.   Fire Alarm Procedures

Section 4

Local benefits
1. Summary of Benefits